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Arab-Israeli Talks

Beilin 'Very Satisfied' After Meeting With Omani

TA2103123295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin met today in Cairo with Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah. After the meeting was over, Beilin told our correspondent in Cairo Yo'el Nir that he was very satisfied with its results. The two officials discussed the Arab boycott and bilateral relations. No agreement, however, was reached on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Oman.

[Begin recording] [Beilin] I hope that hitherto problematic issues are gradually being resolved, including the attitude toward the Arab boycott. Even if no official decision is reached, the secondary and tertiary boycott is for all intents and purposes null and void. There is also a readiness to relax the boycott at the primary level and this is very important. As for bilateral issues, we agreed that El Al will be permitted for the first time to fly over Oman. We still have to reach a detailed agreement on this issue but I am very happy to note that Oman has affirmed its agreement in principle. There is also agreement that Israeli industrialists will send several delegations over the coming days and weeks to Oman. We reached a detailed agreement with regard to Israeli involvement in cooperation on water issues, desalination, research, instruction centers, and displays in Oman. I think we can definitely point to significant progress in our relations. We did not reach any decision with regard to the institutionalizing of political relations; however, I believe that every meeting of this kind constitutes a step forward in this process and political relations will eventually also be institutionalized.

[Nir] You know there are allegations in Israel that it was Egypt that prevented the establishment of diplomatic relations between Oman and Israel. Now here you are at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

[Beilin] Yes, I think that the very fact that this meeting took place in Egypt with Cairo's blessing proves that the Egyptians have no intention of preventing us from improving our bilateral relations with other Arab countries. Oman and Egypt cooperate very closely with each other, and quite to the contrary I believe that with Egypt's blessing we will be able to promote our relations between the Arab world. [end recording]

Accord Said Reached on Power Transfer in West Bank

TA2103190195 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 20 Mar 95 pp 1, 15

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat's expected arrival in the Jericho self-rule area comes as the embodiment of agreements achieved through back channel contacts between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. The Palestinian side in these contacts was represented by Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', the minister of economy, and 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya, the official responsible for security in the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli side was represented by Uri Savir, director general of the foreign ministry, General Shahor, head of the Civil Administration, and 'Uzi Dayan, head of the Israeli army's Planning Branch.

AL-MANAR has learned from a well-informed Palestinian source that the discussions were held in secret over the last three months. They ended with an agreement calling for a gradual transfer of power in the West Bank to the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Israel, Syria Reportedly Agree on Military Annex

TA2203112895 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 22 Mar 95 p 9

[Report by Avino'am Bar-Yosef in Washington]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and President Hafiz al-Asad have reached agreement on the American work plan for a draft military annex to peace accords between Israel and Syria. The draft could lead to a breakthrough within three months.

That is the gist of Secretary of State Warren Christopher's achievement during his shuttle tour last week. It is also the subject of the talks between Ambassadors Itamar Rabinovich and Walid al-Mu'allim which began in Washington yesterday under the auspices of Dennis Ross, head of the U.S. peace team. It is the first time that the Israeli ambassador in Washington has met with his Syrian counterpart since the talks were suspended in December 1994 in the wake of the meeting between the Israeli and Syrian chiefs of staff.

MA'ARIV has learned that the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] Planning Branch under Major General 'Uzi Dayan has prepared an Israeli version of the draft defense annex, which will be appended to the Israeli-Syrian accord. Rabinovich left for Jerusalem last night to receive Vice President Al Gore when he arrives in Israel tomorrow. Senior sources in Washington told MA'ARIV that the U.S. work plan is divided into four parts. It is aimed at bridging the wide gaps that still exist between the sides on security arrangements:

—The ambassadors' talks will focus on defining the gaps and the points on which agreement can be reached on defense arrangements, as well as fixing an agenda for talks between military experts. These talks will resume early next week.

—Dennis Ross will shuttle between Jerusalem and Damascus to receive the consent of the political echelons in both states to an unofficial document that will define the points of agreement and disagreement between the sides.

—There will be a meeting of officers of major-general rank in Washington to translate the understandings into military terms and facts on the ground.

—There will be a meeting of chiefs of staff of both armies to work out military solutions to remaining points of dispute.

Only after the chiefs of staff's meetings will teams of officers be summoned to Washington to draft the military annex. The IDF's Planning Branch has completed the Israeli version of the draft.

The sources in Washington could not define precisely the timeframe required to finalize the discussions. They said that the meetings between the military experts could go on for a whole month if they are held intensively. To repeat, according to the current assessment, an agreement can be reached within three months.

Other sources in the U.S. capital noted that although there is no official agreement on where the border will be drawn, the negotiations will be conducted on the assumption that Israel will withdraw from the entire Golan Heights.

Islamic Affairs

Writer Views Muslim Brotherhood's 'Terrorist' Roots

NC1403122095 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 8 Mar 95 p 6

[Article by Rif'at al-Sa'id, secretary general of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party, in the "A Page From Egypt's History" column: "The Muslim Brothers: the Beginnings"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some people try to differentiate between the Muslim Brotherhood and other terrorist groups. The Muslim Brothers try to enshrine this distinction to impart the quality of "moderation" to themselves and in this way deceive us time and again.

When we confront them with their extremism and terrorism in word and deed, they use the pretext that they only acted this way against colonialism and Zionism. When we confront them with their criminal actions against Egyptian Muslims, they claim that those crimes were a reaction against assaults on their divine call and those who advocated it.

However, whenever we dig up something—and we will always dig up things—about the Muslim Brotherhood's history, we discover that the seeds of terrorism, its instruments, and the willingness to resort to it were present at the core of its original message. This is true to the extent that we can safely say that terrorism is the Brotherhood's ideological foundation and practical policy.

The Muslim Brotherhood's fifth congress (in 1358 Hegira, 1938) was a landmark in the Muslim Brotherhood's march. At this congress, the concept of transferring the movement from the constituent to the offensive stage began. The Brotherhood published its first magazine AL-NADHIR [The Omen]. We have in hand the first issue, dated 1 Muharram 1358 Hegira.

We will try to read some of what was published in that issue. Our aim is to spare people the need of engaging in a futile debate and provide proof of the Muslim Brotherhood's extremism, arrogant outlook on society, willingness to use force, threat to the entire Islamic nation, overbearing attitude towards Muslims in general, and willingness to force Muslims to submit to what it wants.

At any rate AL-NADHIR begins with an editorial signed by [Brotherhood founder] Hasan al-Banna. It contains a passage that we invite the reader to contemplate. It is addressed to the Muslim Brothers and says: Take care of the cadets [al-Jawwalah]. It is known that being a cadet was the first stage through which a member passed before being recruited into the secret apparatus [Muslim Brotherhood's onetime paramilitary Special Order].

The passage continues: Among each segment of your nation, let there be a group of young men who will represent jihad in God's cause, the apex of this religion, and the training for which God gives a double reward. Form battalions (the battalions are hence something different from the cadets and are actually the basic components of the secret apparatus) because the armies of the night will be victorious over the armies of the day.

Have you noticed this phrase? Al-Banna's battalions are "the armies of the night." Why? They will be victorious over the armies of the day. Is this a sign of the clandestine nature of the battalions or what?

In the same issue there is an article entitled "Soldiers, Be Ready" by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Sa'ati (the father of the then general guide of the movement). Listen to what he wrote: "Soldiers, be ready, and let each of you stand on the alert and prepare his weapons. Let none of you look back and go to where you are ordered. Then treat the nation gently for it needs care and gentle handling. Prescribe for it the medicine for many are those who have a suffering heart and a sick body. Spend time preparing the medicine and let the salvation team among you dispense it. All this is good. But what if the nation rejects this brotherhood's call? Listen carefully to the following sentences and contemplate them in your minds. If the nation rejects the call, bind its hands with chains, burden its back with iron, and make it drink the medicine by force. If you find a vicious organ in its body, cut it out. If you find a malignant cancer, excise it. Soldiers, be ready for many in this nation have deaf ears and blind eyes."

Do you now see how the Muslim Brothers looked on the masses of the people, on those who disagreed with their views, and indeed on those who wished to join them?

In what way is this view different from al-Jihad Organization's view that "it is necessary to force the people to worship their God [ta'bid al nas li rabbihim]?" In what way is this view different from the call to coerce the people and subdue with bombs and machine guns?

Here we find 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Sa'ati ordering Brotherhood members to shackle the public's hands, burden its back with iron, and force it to drink the medicine, and to "cut out" and "excise" organs.

Where are their professions of moderation and their claim that they accept Democracy and respect the popular wish? If the Muslim Brothers have changed, why do they insist on declaring that they still follow the policy of their first general guide? Why don't they courageously criticize his method?

Or are they merely prevaricating and deceiving and putting on a false show to protect themselves?

Finally: Muslim Brothers, this is your history from the beginning. Why do you deny it? Or are you following the same path still? This is a specific question. Do you have an answer?

OIC Calls For Israeli Withdrawal From Lebanon

LD1403205095 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1857 GMT 14 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 14 Mar—The Islamic Conference Organization [OIC] has expressed its deep concern about Israel's continued occupation of southern Lebanon despite the UN resolutions, which had called for its immediate withdrawal from southern Lebanon, particularly Resolution 425, and despite the goodwill demonstrated by Lebanon regarding the peace process.

In a statement released today on the 17th anniversary of the Israeli storming of southern Lebanon, which is marked today, Tuesday, the OIC called on the international community to condemn Israel's repeated attacks on southern Lebanon and to put pressure on Israel to adhere to the process of a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East region.

In this context, the OIC stressed that peace could not be achieved without the complete and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, including the holy city of Jerusalem, Syrian Arab Golan [Heights], and the Lebanese territory.

The OIC urged all the world states to fulfill their commitment to the removing of the effects of war, as a result of which Lebanon had been suffering for many years, so that Lebanon would again become an oasis of peace and stability.

Mufti on Jerusalem Visit, Iraq, Extremism

NC1503122595 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 9 Mar 95 p 5

[Interview with Egyptian Mufti Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi by Sana' al-Sa'id; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Sa'id] Does Islam allow for and favor the establishment of relations with Israel?

[Tantawi] I am not a politician, but I can say that the Islamic shari'ah has permitted the exchange of benefits among people, whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim, so long as this exchange of benefits does not harm my religion or my homeland and so long as I stand to gain from it. In such a case, we welcome the exchange of benefits with Israel or others.

[Al-Sa'id] Does this mean that normalization with Israel is conditional on gaining benefits for Muslims?

[Tantawi] Yes.

[Al-Sa'id] What if normalization with Israel resulted in harm to Muslims, particularly since Israel is the party that does not honor its promises or respect any law?

[Tantawi] If it does not honor promises, we must respond to it in a way that disciplines it and preserves our rights in full. Then, we should not deal with it since it does not honor the promises.

[Al-Sa'id] How do you view Israel's aspirations for hegemony over the regional countries and its insistence on nuclear weapons as a security guarantee in a way that upsets balance in the region?

[Tantawi] If the matter is like what you say, then our politicians have enough experience and sincerity for their homeland not to deal with Israel in any way that may harm our religion and homeland.

[Al-Sa'id] What about Israel's measures in Jerusalem, measures that seek to introduce demographic changes by building more settlements and by claiming that it is Israel's unified and eternal capital?

[Tantawi] The Arabs and Muslims must get together and defend themselves by defending Jerusalem as if they were defending their own homelands in which they live. They would all be accountable before God should they remain silent about this evil that Israel is committing.

[Al-Sa'id] Some thought it was too much for the Egyptian mufti to welcome a visit to Jerusalem if invited by Israel.

[Tantawi] I never said that I would welcome a visit to Jerusalem if invited by Israel. I said if I were invited by President 'Arafat.

[Al-Sa'id] But 'Arafat has nothing in Jerusalem so far and therefore he is not in a position to invite anyone.

[Tantawi] I am assuming that the invitation is coming from 'Arafat. At any rate, I would not accept the invitation unless it resulted in good for my religion and my homeland. I also would seek the advice of the people in charge in my country. If I ascertained that the invitation was acceptable and beneficial, then I would welcome a visit to Jerusalem. It is not a question of visiting or not visiting Jerusalem. It is a question of the benefits to gain for the Palestinian brothers from this visit, and only the politicians can determine this benefit. If they recommend it to me, I will go along with the visit, become a martyr there, and die with the Palestinians. But if there is no benefit to gain from it for my religion and my homeland, then damn this visit.

[Al-Sa'id] This is particularly true since Israel may brag about it by saying that Egypt's mufti will visit Israel, despite its procrastination in peace and disregard for the international legitimacy.

[Tantawi] The issue must be understood correctly. Egypt's mufti is not a politician. Egypt's mufti does not go anywhere in the world except after consulting with specialists, such as the Foreign Ministry or those experienced in foreign policy. If they advise me that there is no danger from this visit and that it will be good for religion and the homeland, I make the visit with confidence. In such a case, I should be judged about what I say, not about the visit. If I say something that runs contrary to the ethics or the shari'ah of Islam or something against my homeland, then I should be brought to account. When I visit any country I do not do so from only my mind. I am a clergyman and as such I must seek the advice of the responsible and specialized political quarters. If they assure me that such a visit would be fruitless, then there is no point in making it.

[Al-Sa'id] What about the spiritual side? Doesn't Egypt's mufti consult his heart about such a visit?

[Tantawi] If I go to my enemy's country I will tell him on his own turf: You lied when you said that and you were unjust when you did that. I will not go to Israel to salute it! I will tell it courageously: You are a liar to say that Islam incites extremism or calls for injustice or aggression. I will tell it: Your policy on the settlements and their expansion, whether in Jerusalem or the West Bank, is condemned. For me to say this in the home of my enemy and not in another country shows courage, the same as President Anwar al-Sadat did. He did not go to Israel to be subjugated or humiliated but to deliver a speech at the Knesset. He told them: I came to you from a position of power to warn you. This is courage!

[Al-Sa'id] Excuse me, Your Excellency, there is a difference here. Al-Sadat was a politician but the Egyptian mufti is a man of religion and a spiritual personality. Hence his visit to Israel will be held against him and will be exploited by Israel.

[Tantawi] You have not understood this point. I am saying that I welcome a visit to Israel, or any other country, if it will benefit our Palestinian brothers and the Arabs in general. Otherwise, there is no need for it and I will never make it. I do not know who said I have welcomed such a visit if Israel invites me. This never happened. What I said during my recent visit to the United States was this: If I receive an invitation from President 'Arafat to visit Jerusalem, I will respond favorably. That was how my remarks were published in the United States. I never said that I would welcome an invitation from Israel.

[Al-Sa'id] What is the religious view on the fierce blockade against Iraq, a blockade which disregards humanitarian and religious considerations? Where does religion stand on this issue?

[Tantawi] If a blockade against any Islamic or non-Islamic, Arab or non-Arab country is tainted with a suspicion of injustice, aggression, exploitation, and blind fanaticism, then it is null and void from the point of view of shar'iah. Such a blockade must be resisted by every available means, even if it leads to actual fighting.

[Al-Sa'id] It is the United States which persists in imposing the blockade. It is disregarding the hardships of a hungry nation.

[Tantawi] If the blockaded country has not done anything to deserve the blockade, the blockade is null and void, null and void, null and void whether it is imposed by the United States, Europe, Asia, Africa, or an Arab country.

[Al-Sa'id] The blockade against Iraq was a response to its invasion of Kuwait. Nevertheless, what one objects to is the prolonged duration of this blockade.

[Tantawi] Our punishment of a wrongdoer must be proportional to his action. This is a task for the judiciary.

[Al-Sa'id] Some people believe that the blockade should not apply to religious affairs, such as hajj.

[Tantawi] Not only hajj but also people's livelihoods and everything that is less than affairs of worship and religious beliefs. Any blockade, even if it applies only to luxuries, is null and void if it is imposed by way of injustice, exploitation, and aggression.

[Al-Sa'id] The major powers are imposing blockades on Arab countries like Iraq and Libya but ignoring Israel's daily bombardment of Lebanon.

[Tantawi] I am not a judge. I lay down rules and declare that anyone who is suffering an unjust blockade must rise and defend himself. The whole world, particularly Muslims, must defend the party that is under a blockade as long as the blockade is based on injustice and aggression.

[Al-Sa'id] This is the result of Western double standards.

[Tantawi] We oppose double standards, injustice, aggression, sabotage, and the working of mischief on earth whether this comes from the ruler or the ruled, from a major or small country, from a rich and important person, or a poor and humble person.

[Al-Sa'id] Let's discuss the issue of extremism which has now been confined to Upper Egypt and has turned into a feud between the security forces and those who are described as extremists. What is your view on this matter, particularly as some people are afraid that injustice might be done to either side?

[Tantawi] Here in Egypt we declare that we are against injustice, whether it comes from the ruler or the ruled, the great or the small, the rich or the poor, the strong or the weak. We oppose injustice against any member of the nation.

[Al-Sa'id] How can extremism be remedied?

[Tantawi] Through dialogue and discussion and by punishing the aggressor. As to who has the right to punish the aggressor, it must be the concerned judicial authorities.

[Al-Sa'id] What is your advice regarding the events in Upper Egypt?

[Tantawi] It is a sedition which we pray to God, may He be praised and exalted, to lift from the shoulders of our country. We are against a policeman killing a civilian or a civilian killing a policeman. The security forces are our sons and brothers who watch over the people's security. At the same time, we want the security forces to be just and not harm anyone unless he breaks the law and works mischief in the land. The punishment must be in proportion to the crime. It must not be excessive. God says: "Do not transgress the limits, for God loveth not transgressors." [Koranic verse] The solution is for us to cooperate and remain in solidarity with each other. We must be sincere and let legality have the upper hand. At the same time, we must punish every wrongdoer according to the magnitude of his offense and not exceed this limit. Every crime has its appropriate punishment. I must not kill someone who hurls abuse at me but I can kill someone who places my life in danger because God has given me the right to defend myself. However, if killing is not warranted, I must not kill. I must punish the wrongdoer according to his crime without excess.

[Al-Sa'id] This means that you advocate dialogue with the extremist groups and see this method as the best method.

[Tantawi] Yes, I welcome dialogue. As mufti, I am willing to hold a dialogue with any person who wishes to discuss things with an open heart. I have no objection to holding a dialogue with them. I say: Welcome to dialogue.

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 10 Mar

NC1503135895

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 10 March edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Official Sees Islamic Awakening as Solution
2. Arrest of Islamists Viewed
3. Anti-Islamic Incidents in Pakistan, Ethiopia Viewed

OFFICIAL SEES ISLAMIC AWAKENING AS SOLUTION

In his approximately 3,000-word article on page 5, Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn comments on an article by AL-AHRAM Chief Editor Ibrahim Nafi' on the crisis facing the Middle East peace process. Husayn reviews the "tyranny" and "arrogance" of the "Zionists" against the Arabs and Palestinians and the U.S. "support" for their policies. He notes that the "humiliating results" of the peace process should prompt the officials in charge to reconsider their policies, which he says are responsible for the "weakness" of our nation. Husayn refutes Nafi's blame for the Egyptian opposition for failing to come to terms with the government by noting that the government does not even allow opposition figures to appear on television. Commenting on the Nafi' remark that a strong opposition would back the government in its negotiations with Israel, Husayn argues that this is true only if the "Zionists" realize that there is a "real possibility" that "revolutionaries" and "hard liners" may reach power. In such a case, he adds, they would make some concessions to the "moderates" in power to avoid the "worst" scenario should the "Islamists and radicals reach power in Egypt." Husayn points out that he does not expect "anything good" from the current regime, not because it lacks "patriotic intentions," but because it is incapable of turning these intentions into deeds. Elaborating, Husayn adds: "We lack a unified Arab position and strong armies, our economies are in shambles, and we no longer can use oil as a weapon. In the midst of all this, the Egyptian state has become fully subservient to the United States. And since it obeys what it is ordered to do, the U.S. Government instructs it to accept Israel's hegemony over our affairs." Accordingly, he notes, the Egyptian Government is not in a strong position to negotiate. After reviewing the aspects of what he believes to be a "general U.S. policy" to weaken Arabs, Muslims, and all oppressed people in the world, Husayn points out that reversing this trend may seem "extremely difficult" but it is not impossible. He adds: "This process will take years and will not bear fruit except with huge sacrifices and in stages. If the march of defeat and humiliation took two decades to materialize, our march toward God along the path of jihad will not take that long, God willing, if we have the determination." Concluding, he says: "If God wills that the Labor Party and its allies reach the position of power and decision, we would mobilize the scientists and specialists, and they are many, praise be to God, to plan our action and we would rally the forces of our people to be in the vanguard of the Islamic nation and the oppressed countries to confront the injustice of the U.S. tyranny and its ally Israel. The truth is that the enemies fear the Islamic awakening primarily for this reason, because it is capable of scientific planning and mobilization toward jihad. And if all the government's efforts are geared toward combating this phenomenon, by so doing it is serving the enemies of God and seeking to abort hope and renaissance."

ARREST OF ISLAMISTS VIEWED

An approximately 150-word report by Khalid Yunus on page 6 notes that the "security authorities have stepped up their campaign against the Muslim Brotherhood Group." In this regard, 20 Muslim Brotherhood members have been arrested in Alexandria and detention orders were issued against four of them. In addition, Ahmad Suwaylam al-Alfi has been arrested in al-Sharqiyah Governorate for passing out congratulatory cards on the occasion 'Id al-Fitr in the name of the Muslim Brotherhood. An unattributed 100-word report on page 1 notes that six youngsters have been remanded in custody for 15 days after being accused of organizing Id al-Fitr prayers in a public place in al-Ma'sarah village of Asyut and passing out congratulatory cards in the name of the Muslim Brotherhood.

ANTI-ISLAMIC INCIDENTS IN PAKISTAN, ETHIOPIA VIEWED

An unattributed article entitled "The Hidden Fingers" on page 8 views the incidents involving Muslims in Pakistan and Ethiopia and accuses "hostile intelligence services" of being behind them. The writer starts by reviewing the "great success" achieved by Muslims in Ethiopia, who forced the government to meet their demands for establishing Islamic courts after a "massive" demonstration in January. Two months later, the writer adds, shooting inside a mosque in Addis Ababa left nine worshipers dead. As a result, the government ordered the closure of all mosques in the capital on the excuse of ending "inter-Muslim fighting." The writer notes that some quarters are worried by the rising demands of the Muslims, who form 60 to 70 percent of the population, and their calls for the implementation of the Islamic shari'ah. In Pakistan, the writer adds, masked gunmen broke into two mosques at the same time and started shooting worshipers at random. Rumors soon spread about the outbreak of clashes between Sunni and Shiite Muslims, which led to the death of 30 Muslims. The writer adds: "It is no secret that some quarters are seeking to ignite the situation in Pakistan to keep the state preoccupied with endless internal problems." The writer adds that the Indian intelligence service has previously carried out "dirty operations" in Pakistan to retaliate for Pakistan's support for the Kashmiri Muslims. The writer adds: "This does not mean that we should disregard the Zionists' interest in igniting the internal situation in Pakistan, particularly since it is accused of producing a nuclear bomb."

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Condemns Beersheba Bombing Attempt

TA2103182895 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Khan Yunus today, Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, head of the Palestinian Authority [PA], condemned the attempt to blow up a truck in Beersheba. He said that this act has resulted in preventing Palestinian workers from going to their jobs in cars, and that the PA had worked very hard to obtain permits for them to cross into Israel. Mr. 'Arafat added that the attempt by the two youths in Beersheba was an antinational act.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] I say that I do not condone these types of acts, whose aim is to prevent Palestinian workers from going to work and Palestinian cars from moving. But I would like to tell them that the Palestinian people's will is great and cannot be undermined by a decision imported from here or there. [end recording]

Police Launch 'Wave' of Hamas Arrests

TA2203092395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian police have initiated a wave of arrests in Gaza city in the wake of the discovery of the bomb-laden truck that was meant to blow up in Beersheba. Palestinian sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that some 70 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists were detained before dawn and that the wave of arrests is continuing.

Security forces closed two mosques in two villages in the Ramallah area for three months after incendiary materials were found in them. Our correspondent reports security forces launched searches in the mosque in the village of 'Aruruh in the Ramallah area several days ago. Defense sources said that the activity is part of the struggle against Hamas terrorism.

PA Assails Hebron Attack, Urges Troops Withdrawal

JN2003141295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Mar 95

[From "Today's Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] We start our program from Hebron, which is currently under curfew. The National Authority [NA; Palestinian Authority, PA] has denounced yesterday's armed attack in Hebron, in which two settlers were killed and five others were injured, two seriously. The NA remarked that the only way to save lives is for Israel to implement the agreements it signed with the PLO and to withdraw its troops and settlers from Palestinian towns and villages.

Officials Denounce Attack

TA2003054095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Two members of the Palestinian Authority [PA] have denounced the terrorist attack in Hebron.

Riyad al-Za'nun, the official in charge of health, said that the PA shares the grief of the families and stressed that no terror attack will stop the peace process. Zakariya al-Agha, the official in charge of housing, said that any attack on civilians is deplorable. The two were speaking at the end of a meeting of the PA in Gaza.

In contrast, Yasir 'Amr, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, fears that the attack in Hebron could derail the peace process which is at a dead end anyway. He added that the Palestinians oppose any type of violence, but noted that continuing settlement activities and the occupation strengthen the extremists in the Palestinian camp. 'Amr was speaking from Tunis with our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem.

Referring to the negotiations with Israel, 'Amr said that Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] agreed to conduct the talks and will soon call a meeting in Cairo of the supreme committee dealing with the negotiations with Israel.

'Arafat Discusses Gore Visit With U.S. Official

JN2103201695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat today received U.S. Consul General Abington. The talks dealt with the latest developments in the peace process and U.S. Vice President Al Gore's visit to the National Authority's areas within the next few days.

President 'Arafat also today received the Greek consul general and discussed with him latest developments in the peace process and efforts being exerted on all levels.

'Arafat Adviser on Gore Visit, Peace Process

TA2103152395 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 20 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Jamal al-Halabi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza—Marwan Kanafani, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, said yesterday that the upcoming meeting between the Palestinian president and U.S. Vice President Al Gore in Jericho on 24 March comes within framework of the United State's recognition of the Palestinian National Authority and the emphasis to advance the peace process.

Kanafani added that the Palestinian president will brief Gore on the problems being faced in the peace process. In addition, he will discuss some political and economic issues with the U.S. side. Kanafani noted that without the intervention of the cosponsors of the peace process and the international community, including the European partner and the fraternal Arab countries, the peace process will collapse.

Kanafani expressed the Palestinian president's concern over the future of the peace process and its possible collapse. He said that the Palestinian president is doing his utmost to save the process.

Kanafani noted that the U.S. strategy seeks to link Palestinian economic development with security for the Israelis. The Israeli side is exploiting the security issue to obtain political gains. He added that security can only be ensured through understanding and coordination to stop acts of violence. Accusing the Palestinian side of negligence, as the Israelis have done, will not promote security.

Kanafani denied the existence of any secret talks between the Israelis and Palestinians, adding that there is no need for such talks. He said that the second stage of the Declaration of Principles should be implemented in the same scope and method in which the Jericho and Gaza areas were handed over. That means there should be complete authority and sovereignty—not just the handing over of municipal affairs—in the areas in which redeployment will take place according to a timetable with clear and specific dates for taking over the rest of the territories, including holy Jerusalem.

Editorial Criticizes Gore, Perry Mideast Tours

TA2103183295 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 20 Mar 95 pp 8, 7

[Editorial: "A U.S. Assault on the Region"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Vice President Al Gore is beginning a Middle East tour today with a meeting with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak.

This tour comes at a time when William Perry, the U.S. minister of war [title as published], is paying a visit to the Arab Gulf states. It is believed that these two new tours were undertaken to complement the 11th tour that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher concluded a few days ago.

This U.S. assault on the region not only seeks to underscore what has been agreed upon, but also to expand its scope and include other new issues that basically concern U.S. policy. It is common knowledge that in his tour, Christopher managed to invigorate the Syrian-Israeli negotiating track somehow before announcing the resumption of talks in Washington at the ambassadorial level. With this announcement, the U.S. Administration was able to boost its political position.

As for Minister of War William Perry's tour, it was undertaken not only to persuade the Gulf states to retain the U.S. military presence in the region as a precautionary measure against Iraq and Iran, which are being subjected to a flagrant and hostile U.S. campaign, but also to ensure that these U.S. forces are provided with facilities. Moreover, the tour aims to persuade the Gulf states of the need to buy more U.S. weapons. Naturally, all this is taking place under the slogan of "Concern for the Region's Security." All indications are that the U.S. minister of war will succeed in his mission, namely; enhancing the political success achieved by his colleague, Christopher, with another gain—this time on the military level.

As for U.S. Vice President Al Gore's tour, another goal has been designated for it. That is consolidating economic relations between the U.S. Administration and the region's countries. In addition, there will be an attempt to finalize the other two goals that have been achieved, even if partially. Egyptian President Husni Mubarak is still insisting on his stance on signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. He reiterated this stance during his visit to Japan. Moreover, 'Amr Musa, Mubarak's foreign minister, affirmed this stance yesterday at his meeting with a delegation from the Israeli Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which is paying a first ever visit to Egypt since the signing of the Camp David Accords.

Since the U.S. Administration is keen on maintaining Israel's military superiority in the region, it will try again through Vice President Al Gore to pressure Egypt to moderate its position on this issue, especially as the Egyptian leadership has thrown a new life buoy to Israel's rulers. Gore will also try to press Syria to resume bilateral military talks with Israel in Washington on the chief of staff level. This comes in the wake of the disclosure that a high-ranking U.S. general accompanied Christopher on his latest tour and made a field visit to the occupied Syrian Golan Heights to become acquainted with the security views of the two sides.

So far, it is clear that Al Gore's tour of the region comes to complete the realization of U.S. goals from previous tours. According to all evidence, this U.S. assault does not indicate that the U.S. Administration will change its known traditional position. On the contrary, it will try to assure the Arab states and offer them some marginal gains while maintaining—if not strengthening—its strategic stance that supports Israel's rulers.

'Arafat Voices Pride in 'Extra Sweet' Democracy

MM2003151795 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Khayrallah Khayrallah in Tunis; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Khayrallah] How would you assess the PLO Executive Committee meetings and the Fatah Central Committee meetings?

['Arafat] As usual, when we meet within these important leading frameworks—whether in the framework of the PLO, which is the authority to which the Palestinian National Authority refers, or the Fatah Central Committee, on the grounds that Fatah is the movement leading the Palestinian people—the actual process of meeting together is in itself very important. At this stage in particular it was natural for us to meet to tackle these difficult circumstances, Israel's procrastination, and its nonimplementation of and noncompliance with what has been agreed, in addition to its failure to precisely and honestly implement what we have signed. So it was important to hold these two meetings in these circumstances in order to thoroughly assess this stage and the measures which we should take at all inter-Palestinian, Arab, and international levels, in order to tackle all possibilities.

[Khayrallah] What did you tell those who are opposed to your policies inside the Executive Committee or the Central Committee?

['Arafat] You know that we exercise freedom of opinion. And we have a saying that our democracy is extra sweet [sukkar ziyadah]—of which we are proud.

[Khayrallah] What was your reply to those who expressed opposition?

['Arafat] It is not something between one team and another. Our main concern in the Executive Committee and the Central Committee is public welfare and the Palestinian people's interests, especially in view of the difficult and crucial conditions we are experiencing inside our homeland.

[Khayrallah] Will any changes be made as regards the Palestinian negotiating team?

['Arafat] On the contrary, we emphasized our previous decision vis-a-vis the need for my brother Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] to assume his job as head of the committee following up the negotiations. And of course, he will be assisted by his brothers in the Executive Committee, the Central Committee, or the National Authority.

[Khayrallah] What is your opinion of the resumption of negotiations between Syria and Israel?

['Arafat] Actually we hope that progress will take place, because we believe that a just and comprehensive peace should be established on all tracks: the Palestinian, Jordanian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks. Without that, the peace will not be just or comprehensive. Since we went to Madrid we have been working in that direction, namely the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region—a peace that takes account of all the interests of our peoples and their aspirations and aims.

[Khayrallah] What is your expectation as regards the next step between the National Authority and Israel?

['Arafat] I hope your will exempt me from that question, because no one can made predictions, nor should be reveal our next steps.

[Khayrallah] Will a meeting be held soon between you and Yitzhaq Rabin?

['Arafat] A meeting is supposed to take place between me and Mr. Rabin on the basis of an agreement between me and Shim'on Peres in our recent meeting.

'Abbas Comments on Future Talks With Israel

JN2003141795 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 20 Mar 95 pp 1, 21

["Exclusive" report by Samir Sa'd-al-Din in Jerusalem]

[FBIS Translated Text] PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, who has returned to take charge of negotiations with Israel, said he expects new rounds of intensive talks with Israel in all domains. He added that these negotiations will deal with the second phase of the transitional period as soon as possible. This phase deals with elections, army redeployment, evacuation of cities and populated centers, and transfer of powers.

Speaking to AL-DUSTUR, 'Abbas said: It should be emphasized that elections are closely linked to the redeployment of the Israeli Army. Therefore, we give priority to this matter so we can move on to the final stage which will deal with difficult and crucial topics for our people and the Middle East region. These are Jerusalem, settlement activity, borders, and refugees. He added: We are drawing a rosy picture for future stability, cooperation, and good-neighborliness with the states surrounding us. It is natural that Israel will be part of this environment once we have obtained our people's basic rights.

Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] hoped there will be a practical implementation of the program announced by the Israeli foreign minister on ending the process of negotiations for this stage within the next three months and the middle of July at most. He said: We hope so and wish this to be translated practically by the Israeli side. We are ready to keep negotiating until an end to this stage is reached. We hope Israel will end its intransigence in implementing the clauses of the Declaration of Principles [DOP]. Our brothers, he said, have presented a discouraging picture of the peace negotiations, something which endangers the process. We believe that we can overcome the current crisis and correct the course of the negotiations by implementing the DOP in letter and spirit.

He said the Palestinian delegation was engaged in difficult and tough negotiations with the Israeli delegation and that many rounds were meant only to waste time and prevaricate. He added that the Executive Committee decided to embark on a large-scale diplomatic campaign in the United States, Egypt, Norway, and influential states to help advance the peace process and ensure its progress and continuation. We, he said, think that the foreign powers concerned with peace should help us.

Abu-Mazin added: The Palestinian leadership is meeting the Israeli security demands and President 'Arafat emphasized this several times. However, it should be reiterated that the issue of security is a mutual one. It is essential for the Palestinian people as it is for Israel. Confiscating the land and building new settlements will endanger Palestinian security.

He said one of the most important fundamentals of security lies in the progress of the peace process and the realization of the target for which it was initiated so that all can enjoy security, peace, and stability. This, he said, will curb extremism and acts of violence.

Mahmud 'Abbas said 'Arafat is a sure guarantee for the continuation and success of the peace process if Israel abides by the DOP in letter and spirit and if the Palestinian people enjoy their rights and prosperity.

Abu-Mazin said he will return to the homeland within the next few days to supervise the negotiations and their committees. He added that he has not yet decided whether to reside in Gaza or Ramallah, but said he will certainly spend much time in Gaza, the center of power, near President 'Arafat and his brothers in the leadership. He indicated that his office in Tunis will continue its work as usual because the negotiating process has many rounds abroad.

Links Negotiations Supervision, PA Policies

JN2103142595 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 21 Mar 95 p 25

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, AL-RA'Y—Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, member of the PLO Executive Committee, has linked his supervision of the Palestinian negotiating team to the Palestinian Authority's [PA] political and economic policies and the performance of its administrative and financial agencies. 'Abbas said these issues have not received sufficient attention.

In a telephone interview conducted by AL-RA'Y prior to his departure from the Tunisian capital for Cairo, 'Abbas said a policy must be drawn up for the negotiations. In addition, the objectives and methods of the negotiations should be defined in a way that does not isolate the negotiations from the other efforts and activities that seek to enhance the status of the Palestinian people.

'Abbas said he is pessimistic, since his observations during his visit to the self-rule areas—in addition to the views and observations he receives—indicate that the required efforts to make a good start have so far not been launched.

He said he is willing to return to the homeland, since he views this as a right and a duty. He said he will exercise this right shortly, regardless of all political and organizational activities. He asserted that when all the issues he raised are discussed in detail, then he will be the first to contribute to the building of the PA, which should serve the Palestinian people.

Quray': Janin City Offer Unacceptable 'in Isolation'

JN2103130395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0800 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Ahmad Quray'—Abu-'Ala'—minister of trade and economy in the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], has said that Palestinian-Israeli meetings at the ministerial level will be held this week to discuss the issue of the Palestinian detainees and deportees.

On the issue of handing over the city of Janin to the PNA, Abu-'Ala' said that the Palestinian side will not accept this offer in isolation from a timetable by which Israel commits itself to redeploying its forces in all the occupied Palestinian areas in preparation for handing over the remainder of the West Bank.

Abu-'Ala' pointed out that the return to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations of PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas—Abu-Mazin—seeks to strengthen the negotiating process. He said Abu-Mazin was never replaced, nor was anyone ever asked to assume his duties.

'Arafat Receives Call From Israel's Peres

JN2003210495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 2030 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received a telephone call from Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres this evening. The Palestinian News Agency, WAFA, which reported this, gave no further details on the conversation.

'Arafat Says 'We Must Respect What We Signed'

JN2103153495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat has emphasized that he will remain loyal to the pledge given to the martyrs, led by the master of martyrs Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

In a speech he delivered at the grand national rally held by the Fatah Movement at Rafah Stadium on the 27th anniversary of the al-Karamah battle, he added that there will be no peace other than the Palestinian peace.

He said that during the al-Karamah battle the Palestinian commandos exhibited the greatest forms of heroism and victories.

President 'Arafat said the Palestinian decision is an independent one and is not subject to any party other than the will of the Palestinian child.

The president added that we must respect what we signed the same as the Prophet did regarding what he signed and the reconciliation he concluded.

President 'Arafat declared his rejection of the operations whose aim is to prevent the Palestinian worker from reaching his place of work, and which aim to prevent the cars and trucks from entering Israel.

For his part Dr. Zakariya al-Agha delivered a speech in the name of the Fatah Movement, in which he asked the Israeli Government to accurately implement the Declaration of Principles. He also urged the cosponsors of the peace process and the Western countries to expedite their efforts in order to implement the peace agreement.

Housing Minister Dr. al-Agha urged the national factions and personalities to hold a national dialogue in order to unify the ranks and realize our people's ambitions. He emphasized the importance of national unity. [passage omitted]

Radio Commentary Calls PLO Tunis Meetings 'Farce'

JN2003135295 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1750 GMT 19 Mar 95

[Station Commentary: "Hollow Tools"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Those who wagered that the results of the Tunis meetings—chaired by Yasir 'Arafat—would be other than they were have been hooked by the bait offered them and have fallen in 'the Arafat-Rabin trap.

What took place at the Tunis meetings was an exposed political and organizational farce completely in line with Yasir 'Arafat's famous and exposed method, a method our people know very well. This method has made us all pay prohibitive prices, whether in terms of time, money, efforts, ongoing struggle, and martyrs blood, or in terms of the cause of our homeland and nation. The price we paid is that we gave up the land and the charter. We have become an easy morsel for the Zionist enemy and the United States, its strategic ally. We only blame those who are familiar with 'Arafat's methods and his juggling, those on whose stands we once depended. However, we found out that overnight they agreed to become hollow tools to be used on the Oslo accord, tools 'Arafat uses to face the blowing wind, thus enabling him to continue the chapters of the big Zionist conspiracy against Palestine and the Arab nation.

The Zionist enemy is the party that has rejoiced the most over what has taken place. This enemy says that 'Arafat succeeded in swallowing up his opponents within Fatah and in some PLO departments by putting them in the forefront and exploiting their stands to push ahead the negotiations process and the self-rule, and to expedite his harmful plan that does not seek any good or any reform.

The Zionist enemy says that 'Arafat managed to cushion the action of some grudge-bearers and disgruntled by placing them in the forefront to have our people believe that they have assumed such positions for personal reasons. Had their actions been based on national and pan-Arab stands they would not have accepted being placed at the forefront of the administrative self-rule, leading the negotiations with Rabin's government, or heading political and nonpolitical agencies which bless 'Arafat's measures against Jihad forces, the intifadah, and the forces which effectively oppose the Oslo agreement.

Can naive persons believe that something will be gained when Mahmud 'Abbas replaces Dr. Nabil Sha'th as head of the negotiating delegation? Can they also imagine that the head or heads of the committees that are formed are an asset for Palestine and for the PLO Charter so long as all drink from the same source and eat from the same plate? Can naive persons believe that Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], one of the engineers of the Oslo agreement and the one who signed it at the White House with Peres is any better than Nabil Sha'th? Since 'Arafat wants to expedite the implementation of his known plan, he will not find anyone better than Mahmud 'Abbas to fulfill what he wants, particularly since 'Abbas has been considered as part of the opposition. This way 'Arafat achieves two things:

First, it proves that when he was in the opposition, 'Abbas was mistaken. Otherwise, he would not have agreed to be at the forefront of 'Arafat's ranks. Second, it shows that 'Arafat has exploited this stand in a manner that served his objectives first, and then those of the Oslo agreement.

The results of the Tunis meetings are in favor of the Oslo agreement and the 'Arafat-Rabin plan, and expose the nature of the Zionist-'Arafatist trap that has ensnared some. We believe that the replacement of Sha'th by Abu-Mazin is just part of the operation to preserve the illegitimate and deformed agreement.

We do not imagine that what has taken place will deceive anyone. All the national Palestinian sectors that oppose the Oslo agreement realize that the changes carried out have made by those who produced the Oslo agreement that was woven by the hands of Yasir 'Arafat and the Zionized and Judaization course, using U.S.-Zionist threads.

And soon will the unjust, the treacherous, and the defeatists know what vicissitudes their affairs will take. [Koranic verse] Revolution until the liberation of the land and man.

'Al-Quds Militant Vanguards' Give Rabin Ultimatum

JN2003160595 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic GMT 1400 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brothers and sisters: Your al-Quds radio—al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio on the path of liberating land and man—will exclusively broadcast the statement issued by the al-Quds [Jerusalem] Militant Vanguards [tala'i' al-quds al-mujahidah], in which these vanguards claim responsibility for the heroic operation near Hebron. The statement reads:

O masses of our militant people, the heroes of Palestine and al-Aqsa, O strugglers: The al-Quds Militant Vanguards inside our occupied territory claim responsibility for the daring operation carried out by the Martyrdom-Lovers Group [majmu'at 'ushshaq al-shahadah] against the herds of Zionists settlers on the evening of Monday, 19 March 1995, at the entrance of Qiryat Araba' settlement, near the northern entrance of Hebron. Many Zionist settlers were killed or wounded in this operation. This heroic operation came following the refusal of the Rabin government to release all Palestinian and Arab detainees. The al-Quds Militant Vanguards issued a warning to the Rabin government in its statement on 16 March 1995 to release all detainees.

The al-Quds Militant Vanguards' statement adds: O militant Palestinian people, O heroes of Palestine and al-Aqsa, O militants, O steadfast men in Zionist jails, O those who each day carry out a heroic epic-like operation to keep the pledge to the martyrs and to walk on their path and to make a pledge to our prisoners to liberate them: The al-Quds Militant Vanguards inside our occupied territory announce to our Palestinian masses, the Arabs, and the Muslims everywhere that—with the rise of a new moon on the path of jihad and struggle—we will work to liberate our detainees from the yoke of the Zionist enemy. The al-Quds Militant Vanguards warn the Rabin government that if it fails to release the thousands of heroic prisoners our martyrdom-loving strugglers are capable of carrying out devastating retaliation everywhere inside our occupied territory. We ask, without hesitation, terrorist Yitzhaq Rabin and his government to carry out the following:

1. Release all Palestinian and Arab detainees from Zionist jails within four days, as a maximum, from the date of the announcement.

2. Rabin and his government should deliver the bodies of 3,000 heroic martyrs who fell inside the occupied territory and along the border of Palestine. The bodies should be handed to their parents, both inside and outside the occupied homeland, within this time limit.

3. The al-Quds Militant Vanguards announce that the martyrdom lovers can carry out devastating retaliation anywhere at any time. If Rabin and his government do not carry out what is required within the time limit his government will shoulder the responsibility because our retaliation will be decisive and devastating inside our occupied territory.

Glory to the heroic martyrs.

[Signed] The al-Quds Militant Vanguards

APF Statement Assails 'Arafat, Tunis Meetings

JN2003195195 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic GMT 1730 GMT 20 Mar 95

[Text of "important political statement" issued after an expanded meeting of the APF Central Command in the al-Khalisah complex of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, on 19 March—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. A political statement issued by the Alliance of Palestinian Forces [APF]:

In a meeting held on the evening of 19 March 1995, the APF Central Command discussed the situation and developments of the Palestine question. It considered the recent meetings held in Tunis, including both the meetings of the so-called [PLO] Executive Committee and 'Arafat's [Fatah] Central Committee, as well as the results and decisions made at these meetings.

Stemming from its national responsibility and its consistent and firm position that rejects the Oslo liquidation agreement and all the agreements emanating from it, the APF Central Command is eager to stress the following to the masses of our Palestinian people both inside the occupied homeland and in all arenas of the diaspora and also to the masses of our Arab and Islamic nation:

1. The so-called PLO Executive Committee has lost its competence and legitimacy since it endorsed the Oslo liquidation agreement. The decision made by this committee, along with 'Arafat's Central Committee, to continue the negotiations with the Zionist enemy—a decision that ignores the Palestinian people's position rejecting these agreements—will only be binding on those who made this decision.

2. 'Arafat, along with his team, his subservient self-rule administration, and all the bodies and institutions he holds talks with, do not represent the Palestinian people, nor do they express their will, and are not entitled to speak on their behalf.

3. While vehemently condemning and denouncing the decisions issued by the Tunis meetings, which call for continuing the negotiations with the Zionist enemy, the APF Central Command holds 'Arafat, his team, and his subservient self-rule administration fully responsible for the current situation of the Palestine question. At the same time, the APF Central Command stresses its determination to continue the struggle to topple this liquidation conspiracy and achieve our people's objectives of liberation, repatriation, self-determination, and full national independence.

The APF Central Command also considered the fact that 'Arafat, his team, his subservient self-rule administration, and his security institutions continue to throw the strugglers and mujahidin into prisons and detention camps in response to the Zionist enemy's orders with the aim of halting the resistance and quelling the intifadah. While expressing its vehement indignation about these practices, the APF Central Command warns that this conduct by 'Arafat and his team will kindle internal sedition, which will have grave consequences.

At the same time, the Central Command calls on the masses of our Palestinian people inside the homeland to express their indignation and rejection of these practices and also to demand the release of the detainees in the jails of 'Arafat and the Zionist enemy.

The APF Central Command discussed a number of issues on its agenda and took the appropriate decisions on them.

While saluting the masses of our militant people inside the occupied homeland and in the arenas of the diaspora, and while our masses are preparing to mark the anniversary of the immortal al- Karamah battle and the glorious Land Day, the APF calls on the masses of the Palestinian people to close their ranks and pool their resources in order to escalate the struggle of the glorious intifadah with the aim of clinging to the land, resisting the settlement activity, and confronting the enemy soldiers and the herds of settlers as a prelude to toppling the humiliating and submissive agreement—the Oslo-Cairo agreement—and all its results.

The APF also calls on all living forces in our Arab and Islamic nation to support the Palestinian people's struggle in order to protect their cause and safeguard their national unity and identity, as well as to support their struggle to regain their national rights and confront all conspiracies and plans designed to liquidate the Palestine question, the central cause of our Arab and Islamic nation.

Qaddumi, PNC Figure To Hold Talks With Opposition

JN2103150295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] PLO Central Council members are currently holding intensive meetings in Jordan.

Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, will visit Damascus to hold a national dialogue with the Palestinian factions based in Damascus.

The acting speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC] will return to Gaza to conduct a dialogue with Hamas.

These intensive meetings are held in implementation of the resolutions of Fatah Central Committee and the PLO Executive Committee.

Hamas Criticizes U.S. Efforts To Move Embassy

JN2103144095 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 21 Mar 95 p 17

[FBIS Translated Text] The Hamas Movement has issued a statement in response to a serious document issued two days ago by the U.S. Senate. The document was signed by 93 out of 100 Senate members and demanded the U.S. Administration move the U.S. Embassy in the Zionist entity from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The Islamic Resistance Movement's statement strongly denounces this serious U.S. trend and says: The U.S. Administration and Congressional bias in favor of the Jewish stands and interests is no longer a secret to anyone. It has even reached the point of being blindly dragged behind the Zionist schemes and desires. This was evident in a series of U.S. positions contradicting even the positions of previous U.S. Administrations on most of the substantive issues in the Arab-Zionist conflict, foremost among which is the issue of occupied Jerusalem.

The Hamas Movement warns of the seriousness of this new U.S. trend since it is accompanied by continued campaigns of Judaization and Zionist settlement activity in holy Jerusalem, in addition to practices aimed at effecting demographic and geographic changes in Jerusalem, as well as isolating it and continuing its siege. Hence, a U.S. decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem will constitute a direct U.S. attempt to impose a fait accompli, a recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of the usurping Zionist entity, and a blatant defiance of our Palestinian people and the feelings of all Muslims in the world.

The movement holds the limited self-rule authority responsible for relinquishing Jerusalem by agreeing to postpone talks on Jerusalem to the final status negotiations, something that gives legitimacy to the fait accompli.

Moreover, the movement holds the Arab parties responsible for the Zionists' continued seizure of Jerusalem in light of these parties' silence over the blatant Zionist violations of the sanctity of the city and its shrines. The movement also holds the Arab parties responsible for confining Arab and Islamic demands to only the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem.

The movement stresses it will continue struggle against all forms of Zionist usurpation in occupied Jerusalem and the rest of the Palestinian territories. It says that Jerusalem will continue to be the Muslims' main attraction and the place from which our Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, ascended to heaven. The Muslims' inalienable and genuine rights to the city cannot be a subject of bargaining or concession under any agreement whatsoever.

Spokesman Says Hamas 'in Harmony' With Brotherhood

MM2203114095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Mar 95 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Ghawshah: Whoever Gives Up Palestine Cannot Belong to the 'Brotherhood'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Hamas official spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah has confirmed that his movement's aims were in harmony with the directives of Shaykh Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, which are the establishment of God's rule—meaning an Islamic state—and the liberation of Islamic homelands.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Ghawshah said that there are Islamic movements which might be close to or distant from Hamas' aims and programs in Palestine but no Islamic movement can be described as a Muslim Brotherhood movement if it cedes Palestinian territory, stops working for the establishment of God's law on earth, or abolishes the mechanism of jihad for God.

Ghawshah was answering a question about the attitude of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan toward Hamas and the "controversy" in the group's circles about differences within it [the Muslim Brotherhood] regarding the degree of aid that should be given to Hamas at this stage.

The group's Shura Council had met about a month ago and one of its members submitted two proposals, one urging adoption by the Muslim Brotherhood council in Jordan of a jihad education program for the Muslim Brotherhood to contribute to the jihad when the time comes, and the other urging material and moral support for Hamas. But both proposals were defeated when 14 council members, including Ishaq al-Farhan, 'Adnan al-Jaljuli, 'Imad Abu-Diyyah, and Controller General 'Abd-al-Majid Dhunaybat, voted against and seven members, including Dr. Hammam Sa'id, Dr. Muhammad Abu-Faris, Dhayb Anis, and Dr. Ahmad al-Kawfaji voted in favor.

Dr. al-Farhan, council member and secretary general of the Islamic Action Front, had said in a recent press interview: We had hoped that Jordan would not rush to impose or conclude the treaty before at least reaching some agreement with the various Arab parties. Some circles saw that as indicative of willingness to accept the Jordanian-Israeli treaty in principle if other Arab parties joined Jordan in concluding other similar treaties with Israel.

In his statement, Engineer Ghawshah emphasized that Hamas stems from the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine, as confirmed in the movement's charter. He said that that link is firm, strong, and eternal and nobody can break it or cast doubt on the organic link between the two.

Ghawshah said that Hamas is calling for the liberation of Palestine from occupation through jihad. Hamas emphasizes, he added, that its program stipulates that once Palestine is liberated, an Islamic state should be established by democratic means.

Algeria

Sifi on Economic Issues, Election Plans

MM2103151495 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Mar 95 p 3

[Interview with Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi by Amir Taheri in Algiers; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Taheri] Mr. Prime Minister, could you tell us what is going on in your country? Is it a civil war or just a passing crisis?

[Sifi] Before using such big words as "civil war," let us see what led to the problems we are facing now. The root causes of the current problems can be traced back to policies pursued in the past. I do not wish to spend too much time on a detailed critical analysis of past policies. These were policies dictated by the regime existing at that time. It may have had its own historical justifications. It would be futile to use current values and scales in judging past policies but the truth is that from the late seventies onwards, Algeria began to live beyond its real means. The oil royalties were increasing. Many people thought there was no more need for discipline. The inefficient way in which these royalties were used turned the course of economic development upside down. When oil prices dropped we found ourselves on the wrong track. Our agriculture suffered seriously and our industrial output could not meet the real needs of our people.

[Taheri] So, one could say that the oil royalties were almost a curse.

[Sifi] Not the oil royalties as such but the way they were used. When oil prices rose from $12 to $45 a barrel, we simply decided to consume more and turned to massive importation of consumer goods such as walking, talking dolls and so on and we thought that paradise was just around the corner. We neglected the education system, did not build enough homes, and failed to provide enough work opportunities.

[Taheri] But people who visited Algeria even in the eighties saw a society with serious poverty problems.

[Sifi] That is true but one should remember where we started. When Algeria became independent, it had to build its economy almost from zero. The vast majority of the Algerian people were very poor. I myself used to walk barefoot until I was 14. In the first phase, our country achieved great success especially in the fields of education and medical care. For example, the number of university students increased from a few thousand to over 300,000. These were not small achievements, but then all kinds of discipline and sense of direction disappeared. When oil prices began to fall in 1985-86, the government began to borrow and our borrowing capacity rapidly diminished while the cost of servicing the debts increased. That was coupled with widespread unemployment and social frustration. The ruling authorities at the time decided to cover up the economic failure with what was presented to us as a democratic experiment, but those who mismanaged the economy also demonstrated political mismanagement.

[Taheri] But the policy of pluralism, ending the one-party rule, and the idea of free elections, gained widespread support in Algeria.

[Sifi] Of course, but everything was carried out without careful and ample study. For example, all it needed for the creation of a new political party was no more than 15 signatures. After that, the party would get 200,000 Algerian dinars in government aid. That was a tempting situation, so much so that some families submitted applications to form political parties. The number of publications increased beyond all logic. That, too, was a result of the government's generous and excessive aid. There seemed to be a desire to take the country from the closed one-party extreme to the opposite extreme, bordering on anarchy. An erosion of the state's prestige began. People who were raised to respect and revere the state began to curse and despise it. The ever-present government began to recede and disappear from sight. The 1988 disturbances exposed the state's weakness. The parliament of the one-party state allowed the creation of a new situation. Municipal elections were held, followed by parliamentary elections in 1992.

[Taheri] The elections which the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] won?

[Sifi] The elections which were not completed. Again, the state was absent. There was widespread cheating. About half the voters stayed away. About 1 million votes were annulled on various pretexts. For example, if a voter placed his vote mark on the side of the ballot paper, that was considered void. That being the situation, it was no wonder that most parties complained, some of them calling for the cancellation of the elections. Most of the voting was a slap in the face for the National Liberation Front [FLN], the sole party which had ruled the country since independence. It was also no wonder that the FIS won because it appeared to be the exact opposite of the FLN.

[Taheri] So you were in favor of the cancellation of the elections.

[Sifi] The decision to cancel the elections was made by another government, not our government. Here, I do not have to justify or not justify that measure. My task is to do my best to shift the country to another phase.

[Taheri] Does that mean new elections?

[Sifi] Certainly. Ours is a transitional government. It has two tasks. One is to rectify the course of the economy and the second is to take the country back to the election process.

[Taheri] So far, have you managed that?

[Sifi] As far as the economic task is concerned, our performance so far has been encouraging. We have held negotiations and rescheduled our foreign debts, and Algeria can now again take international loans, which means that the world economy is giving us a vote of confidence. Our currency has stabilized and is in fact rising now. Inflation has been reduced to 25 percent and we hope to bring it down to 15 percent in the next 18 months. After years of negative growth, we now have positive growth. There was modest growth last year but at least we broke the negative vicious circle. We would have done better had it not been for the drought which has gone on for two years and had it not been for the drop in oil prices. In the areas where there was negative growth in 1993, there has been a 2 percent increase. That is not massive but it is a beginning anyway.

[Taheri] And yet, I can tell you, there is no sense of improvement.

[Sifi] That is true. There is a long way to go yet. We have created 100,000 job opportunities but we need millions of such opportunities. We are building 85,000 new homes but we need a million homes. There are people in Algeria who take turns sleeping in family beds because there are not enough places to sleep. Tens of thousands of young people cannot get married because they have no jobs, no homes, or both.

[Taheri] Do you have to resort to shock treatment to satisfy the International Monetary Fund and Algeria's other major lenders?

[Sifi] We are not afraid to use shock treatment where necessary. We decide what we do and we do it because we think it is the right thing for us. Let me tell you that the success we have achieved was not all the government's doing. The trade unions, the Transitional National Assembly, and countless numbers of associations, unions, and administrative units contributed to that because they are all aware of the nature of the problems we are facing. Do not forget that Algeria practically declared bankruptcy when I joined the cabinet.

[Taheri] You have abolished many government subsidies on commodities, which resulted in higher prices leading to more poverty in Algeria.

[Sifi] That is our policy, to put an end to artificial prices. Goods and services should be produced and sold at realistic prices. To protect poorer people from the effects of our reforms, we have created a social security network covering 850,000 families. I assure you that I will not let the poorest Algerians pay the price for the mistakes of former governments.

[Taheri] What about your privatization plans (shift from the public sector to the private sector)?

[Sifi] We are still in the early stages of the project. It is not easy to carry out privatization when many public establishments lack adequate systems for economic assessment. We hope to create a stock exchange next year or thereabouts and to start privatization in a serious manner.

The first step will be selling some government-owned hotels. The government should come out of the commercial field as soon as possible. But we will do so pragmatically and in consultation with the unions and others.

[Taheri] What about the second part of your program?

[Sifi] We are equally determined to succeed here. Our government is here to revive the election process. That means holding elections. Well, we will hold elections.

As you know, President Zeroual has initiated a national dialogue process to determine the conditions and dates related to the elections. In the interests of that process, he risked the conditional release of a number of senior FIS leaders, but it soon became clear that we were dealing with people who were either unable to control those who commit acts of violence or, at worst, who blessed such violence.

[Taheri] So, have the FIS leaders now been sent back to prison?

[Sifi] Yes, some of them have been sent back but the door for dialogue, consultation, and participation in the preparation for the elections is still open.

[Taheri] Does that include the FIS?

[Sifi] Not as a party. Do not forget that the former government banned the FIS through the judicial system. At any rate, the Constitution does not permit the use of religious, ethnic, or linguistic symbols by political parties. What I want to emphasize here is that our government is a neutral judge toward all political forces in the country so long as they respect the Constitution, the republican system, and the principle of democracy, which means accepting the principle of changing governments through elections. I must add another important condition: Violence must be rejected and condemned. Anyone who accepts these conditions would be welcome and we are prepared to work with such people at all government levels.

[Taheri] Does that mean forming a coalition government?

[Sifi] Yes, that offer was made at the beginning but we cannot just go on talking about it for years. This government is here to organize elections within a reasonable period of time, not to postpone elections indefinitely on the pretext that we need more discussions.

The state's legitimacy must be fully restored. That can only be achieved through elections. The restoration of full legitimacy is necessary to ensure continuing economic recovery and consolidate confidence in our political future, for all the world to see. We have decided to begin the process with presidential elections.

[Taheri] When?

[Sifi] The process has started. We are preparing the electoral lists and the final procedures. The president will receive a report in mid-April. As soon as he approves the report we will take it to the Transitional National Assembly which could pass it by the end of May or beginning of June. We could of course also hold popular discussions and debates in a spirit of frankness and openness. We hope to have a consensus in June. That means that from then on we would be able to organize presidential elections.

[Taheri] Is President Zeroual a candidate?

[Sifi] I cannot say. We are concentrating on the immediate task of preparing the ground for presidential elections.

[Taheri] What is your opinion? Will he be a candidate or not?

[Sifi] Frankly, I do not have one, and even if I did, I would not reveal it.

[Taheri] What, in your view, will be the election date?

[Sifi] Again, we still have not finished thinking about it. What is certain is that the elections will be held before the end of this year. Algeria must return to the democratic process as soon as possible.

[Taheri] What about parliamentary elections?

[Sifi] The first task of the next elected president will be to form a new government whose first task will be to hold parliamentary elections, to be followed shortly by municipal elections.

So, in the next two years Algeria will have elected government bodies at all levels.

[Taheri] Could elections be held reliably while tension continues in some parts of the country? How can you be sure that you will have free and fair elections?

[Sifi] We will invite international observers from the United Nations, the Arab League, the Islamic states organization, and others. I believe there will be hundreds or even thousands of reporters from all over the world. It is the duty of this government to guarantee free and impartial presidential elections. I give you my word of honor that we will do exactly that.

[Taheri] What if all the political parties boycotted the elections?

[Sifi] I cannot speak for other parties, can I? I sincerely hope that the parties will not boycott the elections, but what would happen if they did? People would either stay at home and we would lose the world's confidence, or, as I am sure, the people would come out and vote to help the Algerian state restore its full legitimacy and its full authority. But it would be unfair to say in advance that the elections would not be free or impartial. Is that not so?

[Taheri] Some people have told me that neither you nor your ministers can travel to certain parts of Algeria.

[Sifi] I would like to know the names of these parts. Then we can go there with you and with those who told you that story. It is quite the opposite. This government has doubled its visits to all parts of the country. Each minister has been given responsibility for one or two governorates and has to visit these places regularly. In no more than six month we have made a total of 400 ministerial visits to the governorates. I personally have visited areas that no senior government official had visited before.

[Taheri] Is your government really in charge or are there—as some people have told me—hidden centers of power pulling the strings backstage?

[Sifi] I have no knowledge of the existence of hidden centers of power. President Zeroual asked me to form a cabinet and I did. He knows me because we were both members of the former government. There was no acquaintance or contact between us prior to that. I think I will disappoint those who hold the conspiracy theory. There is no secret group running this country. There is a government whose main aim is to hand over power to elected bodies as soon as possible.

[Taheri] Do you believe the security situation will improve sufficiently by the presidential elections date? If there is no such improvement, how would international observers be able to tour the country without fearing assassination? As you know, I am visiting you here in the heart of the capital amidst really noticeable security measures and precautions.

[Sifi] But the tide is turning. We have the initiative and we are pursuing the terrorists. They can still carry out sensational acts of terrorism by planting car bombs and assassinating individuals but we are confident that they will not be able to undermine the elections. If we were not capable, we would not have firmly insisted on holding the elections quickly. I can tell you that the dialogue with the opposition is continuing in various forms. There are many people with goodwill who know that it is wrong to fuel the fire. After all, the threat is to Algeria's future as an independent sovereign state and as a society capable of living peacefully and prosperously.

That future should not be sacrificed for narrow selfish partisan interests. If there is no Algeria where we can all live in peace and dignity, there will be no point in any personal political gain made by any of us. We are a new group, a group not linked to the tragic decisions which led the country to the pain and suffering of the past three years, or about that period. We want to close the page of hatred and bloodshed, not open a new chapter of the same. We are prepared to die for Algeria. Let no one misunderstand us, nobody and nothing can frighten us. God and history are on our side.

Zeroual Invites Parties, Associations for Talks

LD2103203795 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the framework of the consultations and dialogue over the presidential elections to be held this year, State President Liamine Zeroual addressed written invitations today to the following 15 parties and associations to attend bilateral talks: Party of Algerian Renewal; Islamic Society Movement, Hamas; National Organization of War Veterans; General Union of Algerian Workers; National Liberation Front; Rally for Culture and Democracy; National Union of Algerian Farmers; National Organization of Martyrs' Children; Socialist Forces Front; Islamic Ennahda Movement; Movement for Democracy in Algeria; Ettahadi Movement; Democratic Movement for the Renewal of Algeria; Algerian Movement for Justice and Development; National Party for Solidarity and Development.

In the invitations addressed to these groups to attend the bilateral meetings which will start next Monday, 27th March, the president of the state points out that the talks will focus on the presidential elections and all aspects of their conduct under the best conditions, as well as on the issue of stopping violence.

Presidency Issues Statement on Talks With Parties

LD2103190295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the consultations and dialogue over the presidential elections, representatives of the presidency held a series of four meetings with 34 political parties and 60 organizations from the civil society on 11, 14, 15, and 20 March [Monday].

At the opening of each session, the presidency's representatives presented a number of explanations and clarifications regarding the framework for exchanging views.

Within the same context, the participants were reminded that the declaration to hold presidential elections this year is an expression of the will to progress toward resolving the current crisis. It also indicates concern to entrench the ultimate objective of the transitional period mentioned in the platform of the national consensus, namely a return to the electoral process, a statement issued today by the presidency says.

The statement adds that the presidential elections to be held this year are the result of various efforts made by the state aimed at promoting dialogue to support the national consensus. The dialogue in which the state continues to participate also includes organizational preparations for the presidential elections and any other aspects relating to the good running of the elections, including ending violence.

During the same meetings, the majority of the participants supported holding the presidential elections this year, while others noted that their success requires deepening the dialogue to reach a consensus and to ensure the participation of all political parties without exception.

It was recalled that the head of state very often reiterates his readiness for genuine national dialogue within the very known constants and with a clearer aim.

Regarding the review of the elections law, the majority of participants supported revising the arrangements of the elections laws necessary for organizing presidential elections. Regarding the candidates for the elections, the presidency registered a proposal by a number of participants stipulating that candidates should submit a statement of their assets.

Concerning the security problem, the presidency statement says that eradicating it requires time and that the state has adopted a policy of both firmness and compassion simultaneously. The eradication of this problem is a question that requires the participation of the Algerian society as a whole.

As for the initiative of national reform, the representatives of the presidency did not conceal the limitations and pressures accompanying the overall effort, making it clear that this initiative depends on optimum use of national capabilities and on the involvement of the entire society in tackling the national problems.

Zeroual Advocates Reforms at Cabinet Meeting

LD1903190195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Liamine Zeroual, the head of state, chaired a meeting of the Council of Ministers today at the headquarters of the presidency. In this meeting, the Council of Ministers discussed a number of files, including the economic file and current reforms.

In his intervention in this respect, the head of state called upon the government to implement the necessary reforms to raise the effectiveness and return of the national economic apparatus.

President Zeroual also insisted on promoting the consultations between the various economic and social partners as they constitute a guarantee for the nation to rally around these reforms.

The Council of Ministers also touched upon the current preparations for the presidential elections scheduled before the end of the current year.

'At Least Seven' Islamists Killed in Kabylie

LD2203104195 Paris LCI Television in French 0900 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At least seven Islamists were killed in the Kabylie region yesterday. They had attacked a village to requisition weapons. The inhabitants put up resistance for several hours until the arrival of police officers and soldiers.

Fifteen Reportedly Killed in GIA Clash

LD2203105595 Paris LCI Television in French 1000 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, 15 people have died in a clash among men belonging to the GIA, the Armed Islamic Group of the Islamic Salvation Front about 150 km west of Algiers. This clash is reported to have been the first one since the GIA threatened to crush other armed Islamic groups. It claims to be the only flag bearer of the jihad, the holy war, in Algeria.

Egypt

Musa on NPT, Relations With Iran, Iraq

MM2203090695 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 18 Mar 95 p 6

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by Husayn 'Abd-al-Ghani in Muscat; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ['Abd-al-Ghani] President Husni Mubarak held talks with Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id in Muscat (the day before yesterday). What are the main issues which were discussed in the talks? And are their views identical, especially as some people say from time to time that the two countries adopt different positions on some issues, such as Iran, the possibility of relying on the Damascus declaration as a framework for Arab-Gulf relations, and so on.

[Musa] The main issue is the situation in the Arab world and the peace process. Views between Egypt and Oman are very close, and it is untrue that there are differences. However, what I would like to say and focus on is that a difference of opinion between any two fraternal states over an issue or two is not a bad sign, but, rather, a healthy sign. Because we should abandon our old way of thinking which always tried to stress that all views are identical - - which is not, nor has it ever been, sound with regard to inter- Arab relations. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Ghani] Is there backtracking on Egypt's position on the issue of linking its signing the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] to Israel's announcement of its commitment to signing the treaty on a specific date? And if there is no backtracking, what is the compromise which President Mubarak indicated that you will discuss with the Israeli Government?

[Musa] There is no backtracking. It is a position which concerns Egyptian national security, pan-Arab security, and regional security. The issue is not to do with the signing of the treaty, but to vote for a position on indefinite or long-term renewal. This is what we are opposed to. Why are we opposed to it? Because there is an Israeli nuclear program outside the legal system. Egypt is an NPT member, and we have always been advocates of nuclear nonproliferation, that is, advocates of "global" nonproliferation, not nonproliferation based on selective foundations that exclude Israel.

Such a proposal harms our national dignity, and it also threatens our national security. Why should one state be exempted? There must be reasons, but these reasons are unacceptable. This is why we will not agree to the indefinite renewal of the treaty as long as the Israeli position has not moved toward joining the treaty or establishing a region free from nuclear weapons in the Middle East. Only such an orientation would cause us to reconsider our position and take another decision. But in view of the lack of an Israeli move in the direction in question, our position is clear and conclusive: We cannot agree to the indefinite renewal of the treaty.

['Abd-al-Ghani] What about a compromise with Israel?

[Musa] There is no compromise. There is a move toward joining the treaty or establishing a region free from nuclear weapons, in the sense that the Israeli nuclear program should enter the framework of international legitimacy and be subjected to inspection. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Ghani] It has been reported that some Gulf states cannot join the Egyptian position on nuclear weapons, because, if they do, nearby Iran would not sign the renewal of the treaty, and they, of course, want it to sign. And some other Arab states have expressed coolness on the question of not signing the renewal. So has Egypt actually failed to secure a collective Arab position supportive of its position, which it presented through a plan it submitted to the Arab League?

[Musa] First of all, Iran is a party to the treaty, and it has announced that it will sign the renewal of the treaty. Thus that talk is unsound. And since Iran is going to adhere to the treaty, it is useful to know what the real threat to the region is. The real threat is the existence of a military nuclear program that is not subject to inspection, questioning, or any of the international laws, conventions, and treaties. We have explained our position, and if any Arab state wants to differ with us in this connection and act alone, it is its own responsibility. As for us, our responsibility is clear, and the next Arab League meeting will define the framework of Arab thinking. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Ghani] Although Egypt is not a member of the Security Council, its regional role can influence the question of lifting the sanctions on Iraq. Where does Egypt fit in the feverish race between Iraq one the one hand and Britain and the United States on the other, especially as President Mubarak declared in Japan his support for alleviating the Iraqi people's suffering?

[Musa] The Iraqi people's suffering cannot, nor should it, continue. And we should act as Arabs toward lifting the difficulties and suffering on the Iraqi people. Of course, the Iraqi regime is responsible for the Iraqi people's suffering. But we do not want the situation to develop to the point where we all would be held responsible for what is happening to the Iraqi people or for a human catastrophe affecting the Iraqi people.

['Abd-al-Ghani] Do you expect the sanctions imposed on Iraq to be lifted this year, and will that be done tacitly and gradually, not in the form of an open resolution in the first stage?

[Musa] There are numerous views, which we are following up, but they have not yet led to any specific result. I know that there are talks inside and outside the Security Council framework on this issue. But we are only following up the present stage.

['Abd-al-Ghani] Egyptian-Iranian relations are a mystery. They tend to see relaxation sometimes and tension at other times. And the causes of the tension do not seem to be clear sometimes. Is this attributable to the fact that Iran supports the groups of political violence, or is it attributable to what is termed its increasing ambitions and threats to the Arab states in the Gulf? And have you decided to do away with a third channel like Syria or Oman to work to develop you relations with Tehran? Are your similar positions on the NPT not bringing you closer to one another?

[Musa] Relations with Iran have numerous complications. Iran is a state whose people are a fraternal people. It is a Middle Eastern state, and there are common interests between us and it—interests which benefit both sides. On the other hand, there is a crisis with Iran. There is the Gulf islands issue (the United Arab Emirates' islands), and Iran's policy in the Arab region and Islamic region, and the accusations leveled at Iran. This question should be clarified by the Iranians so as to reassure everyone.

The Iranians are known for their intelligence and are capable of overcoming these two obstacles, if overcoming them is in Iran's interests, and I believe it is.

We in Egypt do not need a third channel, because relations between us and Iran allow direct confrontation or dealings. I always meet with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on any occasion that brings us together in an international conference, UN meetings, Nonaligned Movement meetings, or the meetings of the special committee on Bosnia. We discuss these matters, and if there is any issue, we exchange views over it. But there is a problem in relations with Iran which we hope will disappear, because Iranian- Arab relations should be constructive and sound.

['Abd-al-Ghani] If the heads of Egyptian and Iranian diplomacy met on several occasions, why has none of the disputes been resolved? And is there anything new in these relations?

[Musa] The severity of matters has eased to some extent. But it seems that there are still political tendencies in Iran differing over this issue. So let them take their time and agree over it. [passage omitted]

Says NPT Stance Not To Change

NC1903175395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 19 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has asserted that Egypt will not go back on its stance on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] unless Israel adopts a positive and forward step. In remarks he made today, he said the issue is not that the Arab states should act, regardless of Israel's stance, but Israel should act as well. He affirmed that action will be met by action and non-action will be met by non-action. He denied that Egypt may reverse its position and affirmed that all states must have equal obligations toward the NPT.

Musa said if Egypt and other states are asked to remain within the NPT, there must be real Israeli progress toward this goal and a commitment to act toward the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction comprising Israel and the Arab states. He added that Egypt's final stance on the extension of the NPT will depend on Israel's reply. If the reply is positive, the road will be open for solutions that will enable the Arab states and Israel to achieve a stable security situation. If the reply is negative, Egypt will have a clear stance on the NPT and will express this stance at the meeting of the international conference on the extension of the treaty. He added that the whole matter will be discussed at a meeting of the Arab League council on Wednesday [22 March].

Asked by an Israeli journalist what does he mean by his statement that peace is in the interest of Israel and the Arabs and not only in the interest of Israel, Musa said what he means is that there should be obligations by the two sides. Israel must commit itself to peace and to implementing its agreements with the Palestinians. He said Israel has rights and obligations and so does the Arab side. We cannot speak about rights for one side and neglect the other side.

Asked by an Israeli journalist on the normalization of relations between Egypt and Israel, Musa said the Egyptian people feel frustrated when they see that Israel does not even want to speak about its nuclear weapons. This undoubtedly clouds the atmosphere in the region. He added that during his meeting today with the Israeli Knesset delegation, he affirmed the importance of energizing the peace process on the basis of the land-for-peace principles, rights versus rights, and obligations versus obligations. He said Israel's possession of nuclear weapons and its non-attempt to make headway toward a resolution of this issue will affect the situation in the region and the future of the security arrangements in it.

Musa said the discussions with the Israeli delegation were important and useful. He said such visits and meetings are useful in that all issues are discussed frankly. Egypt has explained its viewpoint and listened to the Israeli viewpoint, which indicates there is disagreement between the Labor Party and Likud viewpoints.

Musa affirmed it is necessary for the viewpoints of the Labor Party and Likud to agree on the importance of the peace process on the basis of the land-for-peace principle and the importance of stability and security for all parties, and not only for one party. He said the Palestinian-Israeli track is at an impasse now. The two sides must act to scrupulously and faithfully implement the Oslo and Cairo agreements. He also expressed the hope that U.S. Secretary of State William Christopher's tour of the region will lead to progress on the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks with Israel because frustration will increase in the absence of progress. He added that the implementation of the remaining clauses of the Declaration of Principles does not only depend on the Palestinians but also on the Israelis.

On the redeployment of the Israeli forces, Musa said the redeployment or withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Palestinian towns is a fundamental issue so the Israeli-Palestinian peace process may move forward. He said elections cannot be held without the redeployment of the Israeli forces, and this is mentioned in the Declaration of Principles. He added that he does not believe the Palestinians will agree to hold elections without the redeployment of the Israeli forces, especially as Israel signed the Declaration of Principles, which states that the Israeli forces will withdraw before the elections. The postponement of this withdrawal is not in the interest of the peace process.

Al-Baz Explains Stance on NPT Extension

NC1703182895 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 17 Mar 95

[Interview with Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, by unidentified correspondent in Tokyo; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] What is Japan's position on the extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] and how does it view Egypt's position on this subject?

[Al-Baz] Japan has a special position on the NPT because it is the only country in the world to suffer from a nuclear war. It is the only country to be hit by nuclear bombs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Therefore, it seeks to obtain the approval of all or most states for the extension the NPT for an indefinite period. Like Japan, we naturally call for this because we want to rid our region of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Another similarity with us is that Japan has a neighbor, North Korea, which has shown signs of interest in having a nuclear program. It is true that the United States has urged and put pressure on North Korea to agree to keep away from this nuclear program and has placed controls to confine this program to peaceful purposes. However, there is some similarity between Japan's stance on North Korea and our stance. Like Japan, Egypt wants the treaty to continue and to be extended. Egypt wants respect for the treaty to be universal. We have a similar issue. We have a neighbor state which has a nuclear program which has its serious implications and which we must take into consideration.

We must strike a balance between two points. On the one hand, we want the NPT to be extended because this is in our interest. On the other hand, we want this extension to be universal in the sense that all states should subscribe to it. There should be no exceptions. Neither North Korea, nor Israel, nor other states should be outside this treaty. Hence, we are trying to find out what the best ways are to ensure that the treaty will be strengthened without this making the security in the region unbalanced or inequitable. A state like Israel must have a monopoly in this regard amid an Arab atmosphere which does not have this nuclear capability and in which no state is thinking seriously of developing its nuclear military programs. We want to clear the region and this is in the interest of Israel itself.

Even if Israel cannot now take all the full steps, we want it to take sufficient steps that will eventually lead to Israel's dismantling of its nuclear weapons.

[Correspondent] Does this stance have an adverse effect on Egyptian-U.S. relations, particularly as President Mubarak will visit the United States next month and as voices are rising criticizing the Egyptian stance on the NPT?

[Al-Baz] The voices criticizing the Egyptian stance in some states, especially the United States, do not understand the Egyptian stance. They believe Egypt is against the extension of the NPT. We are not against the extension of the NPT. We support the extension of the NPT. We do not want to downgrade this treaty. We want to add to it. We do not want to leave it or to disengage ourselves from its regulations. We want Israel to join it. We want to add to it and not to subtract from it. There should not be a major disagreement. Perhaps the disagreement boils down to the fact that the United States believes the present time is not suitable to put pressure on Israel to follow this course. We say it is suitable for two reasons: First, the date for the extension of the NPT is approaching. Second, the peace process has moved and made great progress. Therefore, these two factors must reflect on the status of the NPT. [passage omitted]

Reportage on Visit by Israel's Yosi Beilin

Beilin on Talks With Musa, NPT

NC2103155495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1450 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met today with Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, who is visiting Cairo.

Following the meeting, Beilin said that they discussed the Middle East peace march, particularly after U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region, in addition to the choices pertaining to negotiations with Syria, and Egyptian-Israeli relations.

He said that despite the doubts and obstacles standing in the way of the peace process, Israel is still working to achieve peace with its neighbors. He affirmed that Egypt is the cornerstone in the peace march and that it will continue to play its role as peacemaker in this part of the world.

The Israeli deputy foreign minister said that he and Minister Musa discussed the issue of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. He hoped each side would understand the other's position and that the issue would not stand in the way of bilateral relations. He said that Israel is preparing a reply to the Egyptian proposals concerning the treaty.

Beilin reiterated that Israel will not join the NPT because one state, Iraq, has not complied with the provisions of the treaty, as he put it.

Beilin added that his talks with 'Amr Musa touched on the proposal to set up a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, the proposal President Mubarak put forward. He added that such a proposal will be viable when full peace is achieved in the region.

Yosi Beilin does not expect diplomatic relations to be established between his country and the Sultanate of Oman soon.

Commenting on the recent Israeli-Omani talks, Beilin said that they discussed issues of mutual interest in the fields of trade and aviation in Omani airspace.

Commenting on the multilaterals, Beilin said that the multilateral steering committee will meet within the next two months.

Discusses Peace Talks With al-Baz

NC2103222595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2145 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for political affairs, conferred this evening with Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, who is currently visiting Cairo.

Speaking after the meeting, Beilin stated that they had discussed ways to support the negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and speed up the peace process. He added that the Syrian-Lebanese [as received] negotiations with Israel started yesterday, Monday, at the ambassadors' level. Beilin hoped that the level of negotiations will be upgraded and pointed out that talks are under way with the Palestinians to hold the elections before June and redeploy the Israeli troops.

Regarding the elimination of weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East region, the Israeli official said that this issue could be talked about when peace prevails in the region.

Asked by MENA why Israel refuses to hold talks for freeing the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction parallel to the current talks on peace in the region, Beilin said: We cannot speak about something abstract. Peace must be attained first because peace is the first floor that can be built upon by the establishment of an arms-free zone, which is the second floor, as he put it.

Beilin is due to leave Cairo later tonight returning to Israel following his talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Dr. al-Baz.

Concludes Visit

NC2203071395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0639 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Mar (MENA)—Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin left Cairo early today after a one-day visit to Egypt during which he was received by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

Beilin's talks with Musa and Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, dealt with the Middle East peace process and its developments and ways to strengthen it.

MENA Reports Gore Departure for Amman

NC2103133395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1310 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Luxor, 21 Mar (MENA)—U.S. Vice President Al Gore and his delegation left the city of Luxor for the Jordanian capital, Amman, this afternoon following a three-day visit to Egypt.

In Cairo, Gore held important talks with President Husni Mubarak on bilateral cooperation and the means to implement the partnership agreement for economic development.

Muslim Brotherhood Spokesman on Elections

NC2103210595 Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English 16-22 Mar 95 p 2

[Interview with Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, by Amirah Huwaydi; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Huwaydi] Are you planning to contest the elections, despite the recent government clamp down of Brotherhood members and Brotherhood-controlled syndicates?

[Al-Hudaybi] First of all, the elections will be held on the basis of the individual candidacy, and not the slate system. This means that individuals will nominate themselves. If members of our movement wish to nominate themselves, they can do so. We have no control over that.

[Huwaydi] But is the Brotherhood, which boycotted the last elections, contesting the coming vote?

[Al-Hudaybi] In 1990, we tried to obtain guarantees from the government that the elections will be clean. But this time, although I am certain that the elections will not be clean either, we decided that we should not remain isolated from the political scene.

We will not act in a childlike manner and withdraw after we announced earlier that we would contest the elections. Citizens should struggle for the sake of their country, for the preservation of human, political and civil rights and legitimacy.

Thus, there is no possibility that the Brotherhood may withdraw from the elections; we are more determined than ever to take part.

[Huwaydi] Do you consider new alliances with other parties such as the Nasirists?

[Al-Hudaybi] The Brotherhood will only maintain its alliance with the Labour and Liberal parties. But the Liberals sometimes act as if there is no coalition at all. In the individual candidacy elections, the parties should coordinate and this is what we are going to do with the Labour Party.

As for the Nasirists, we know for a fact that they are against us because they publish incorrect information about us in their newspaper. I do not know how we can form alliances with other parties which do not accept us.

[Huwaydi] Has the Salsabil case and accusations that Brotherhood figures were involved in financial malpractices and anti-government activities affected your image for the coming elections?

[Al-Hudaybi] We have gone though worse; the 1987 clamp down on the Brotherhood was even more fierce, but we managed to withstand it. However, it is true that the latest accusations have affected our reputation and image. They have gone far enough in presenting us in TV series as corrupt fanatics who finance terrorism. This media campaign may have very dangerous results.

I don't think that it is fair for the government which has complete control over television to use it against us, simply because all these accusations have no basis in fact and cannot be proved. Under the law, a person is innocent until proven guilty.

Policeman Shot Dead in al-Minya

NC2003154395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1440 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—A policeman was martyred today after being shot by an unknown assailant in the village of Bani 'Ubayd, Markaz Abu Qurqas, in the Upper Egyptian Governorate of al-Minya.

A responsible source at the Interior Ministry said that at approximately 1100 today, an unknown assailant shot dead Police Sergeant Rabi' Muhammad Hassan of the Asyut Security Directorate, while he was standing near his home in Bani 'Ubayd village. The same source added that leading security figures from the al-Minya Security Directorate and criminal laboratory experts went to the scene of the incident for an examination. Police agencies continue their efforts to arrest the assailant and investigate the matter. The prosecution has been notified to begin an investigation.

MENA Correction to Mubarak, Gore Hold News Conference

NC2003212095

Cairo MENA supplies the following correction to the item headlined "Mubarak, Gore Hold News Conference," published in the 20 March Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT, pages 6 to 8:

Page 8, column one, fourth paragraph, last sentence, to end of item make read: ...in this connection.

President Mubarak commented on the same question by saying: We do not expect aid to continue indefinitely. The level of aid might diminish and we understand this perfectly.

In response to a question about the impact of the peace agreements on Egyptian-U.S. relations, the U.S. vice president said that this will add a lot to Egyptian-U.S relations in various fields, particularly the economic and technological fields. What counts is to enhance bilateral relations, which we consider to be extremely important, he added.

Asked what has been done to provide assistance to the Palestinians, Gore replied that he believes the donor states should provide assistance to the Palestinians soon so that they can build the necessary infrastructure. We must persuade the donors to do that promptly, he said.

The U.S. vice president noted that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher discussed this issue with officials in several donor states and establishments to provide immediate assistance to the Palestinians... (rewording)

Libya

NATO Expansion Toward South Mediterranean Seen

LD2103220295 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The political editor of the Jamahiriyah news agency, JANA, has stated that NATO's announced military expansion toward the southern Mediterranean, under a pretext which was formulated in a deceptive manner, coincides with intensive U.S. moves in the Arab region.

The editor says that the region was visited by the U.S. secretary of state, which was immediately followed by the visit of the U.S. secretary of defense, which in turn also overlapped with the visit of the U.S. vice president.

The editor points out that while NATO, the alliance of neo-colonialism, was threatening to declare war on the Arabs, the U.S. Government embarked on a policy of pressure and blackmail toward Egypt and Syria, in a persistent bid to force them to give in to the Israeli enemy and its goals, aimed at imposing its domination over the Arab homeland after massacring its people.

He adds that the U.S. plan to turn the Arabian Gulf states into depots for all types of weapons, burial grounds for nuclear waste, and military naval and air bases, is part of the strengthening of U.S. and western military concentrations in the Arab region.

The editor says that these huge pressures are closely accompanied by a plan for an organized plundering of Arab wealth and the exhaustion of their material and natural resources. This, he adds, has reached such proportions that it is no longer a surprise when the Gulf states announce their bankrupcy as a result of their dealings with America and the West.

He says that the West, which added the word colonialism to the political dictionary, caused two world wars, which cost the lives of tens of millions of people, polluted the seas and the oceans, burned down forests, destroyed the environment, and defaced cultures, is now getting ready to commit its last act of madness which will destroy life on earth.

The editor adds that since the end of World War II, the West has been pumping huge quantities of material aimed at defacing cultures with a view to propagating the tenets of its policy, namely consumption, gradually marketing its imposture, and is now using all this in its heinous crusading onslaught against the Arabs and the Muslims. He says that the colonialist West relies on exporting crises to the Arab homeland, sowing discord, causing civil wars, hatching terrorist groups, destroying morale, fighting unity and the building of progress in the Arab land, monopolyzing knowledge and forbidding it to the Arabs, and encouraging a brain drain to the West of Arab scholars and creators in order to prepare the ground for NATO's barbaric invaders to occupy the Arab homeland.

Morocco

*Article Details Party Makeup of Filali Cabinet

95AF0062A Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 9-15 Mar 95 pp 30-31

[Article by Bahia Amrani: "A Blow For Nothing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Shunned by its own majority and disapproved of by the opposition, the new government will have quite a hard time enforcing a return to normal political life.*

Businesses and chancelleries heaved a big sigh of relief on 27 February when Hassan II received the 35 members of the new government. Ever since 31 January, when Abdellatif Filali was returned to office and charged with putting his team together, activity in the country had almost ground to a halt, with members of the outgoing cabinet merely expediting current business, something that would not improve a socio-economic situation already seriously affected by a persistent drought.

So it had taken the prime minister one month of consultations before he could draw up the list of his ministers. After the breakdown of the talks with the opposition parties, which early in the year had refused to assume the running of the state, Abdellatif Filali had been charged with inviting the majority parties of the right to join the government next to a core of technocrats. That was a formula that had been in effect up until the most recent legislative elections in 1993. This time the prime minister did not have an easy job. Irritated by what they consider to be favors granted to the opposition, the majority parties did not hide their dissatisfaction when Abdellatif Filali only proposed 11 ministerial positions to them.

Furthermore the negotiations between the prime minister and the five majority parties—the Constitutional Union Party (UC), the National Rally of Independents (RNI), the Popular Movement (MP), the National Democrat Party (PND), and the National Popular Movement (MNP)—had brought the lack of homogeneity within the parliamentary majority into relief. Throughout the talks Abdellatif Filali negotiated, separately, with the five parties and not with the parliamentary majority as such. Asking that the government match the political map that had been drawn in Parliament—and thus claiming a majority of the seats—each one of the five parties first fought for its own interests.

At the end of these talks, Abdellatif Filali was forced to form his cabinet with only three majority parties (Maati Bouabid's UC, Mohand Laenser's MP, and Arsalane el-Jadidi's PND). For their part, Ahmed Osman's RNI and Mahjoubi Aherdan's MNP decided to remain outside the government—the disagreement having been about the choice of men who were to represent them and, in the case of the RNI, about the assignment of portfolios (he wanted to get the economic and financial departments).

Polytechnic Graduate

So the new team is made of up 35 members, 15 of whom are technocrats or leading independent figures (13 of them were already part of the government). The other 20 came from the three majority parties. Nine ministers come from the UC, eight from the MP, and three from the PND.

To be sure, these parties have won important portfolios: finance and foreign investments, justice and tourism for the UC, agriculture and transport for the MP, and health for the PND.

But this is far from giving them true weight. The sensitive ministries have remained in the hands of technocrats (commerce, industry and handicraft, energy and mines, ocean fisheries, privatization, national education and higher education). And the important portfolios assigned to the parties were assigned rather to their holders, taking their technocratic abilities into consideration. That was the case of the Ministry of Finance and Foreign Investment, entrusted to Mohamed Kabbaj, an engineer and graduate of the Polytechnic and a former minister of public works, and of the Agriculture Ministry, assigned to Hassan Abouyoub, a former minister of tourism and ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Besides, the two men had been "pushed" into joining their respective parties with a view toward a change-over of political power and there they had been met with distrust.

If the three of them, the UC, the MP, and the PND, have the majority of the portfolios within the government (20 out of 35), they do not have a majority of votes in Parliament, as their members account for only 136 seats. Even if support from the RNI and the MP is not in doubt, the majority's situation is an uncomfortable one. In a word, the makeup of the new Filali cabinet is the start of a return to normal political life, but the government is still in the minority in Parliament.

More stunning yet is the separation of the interior and information ministries. Further the latter will change name—it will now be called the Communications Ministry—and its minister, Moulay Driss Alaoui M'daghri, will also have a new assignment: that of government spokesman. These were decisions that were warmly greeted by the opposition, which had not stopped calling for this openness. Similarly the Interior Ministry has gotten rid of the environment, which has been elevated to the rank of ministry.

Further details of the Filali government's intentions will be provided in the statement of general policy which the prime minister will present to Parliament (before 15 March according to the royal wish) and which will be followed by a [candidate] nominating vote. But that program should not contain any surprises. The general lines of the country's economic and social policy are shared and supported by the majority parties. The latter again demonstrated this by passing the 1995 finance bill. At no time during the negotiations between the prime minister and the parties was the question of a future program brought up.

The conditions under which this government is being born do not strengthen it. Following as it does the failure of the change-over of political power, it looks like a weak fallback solution despite the unquestioned abilities of some of its members. Criticized by three parties that think they are inadequately represented and shunned by two others (the RNI and the MNP), the government is poorly perceived by the majority in Parliament.

Bitter Review

In the opposition's ranks, the review is a bitter one and the comments disenchanted. Labor unionist Noubir Amaoui, the secretary general of the Democratic Labor Confederation [CDT], is even sorry over the departure of some of the technocrats from the outgoing team.

But the state of political life will not be worsened by any future boycott of the government within Parliament. As Mohamed Elyazghi, the first deputy secretary of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces [USFP] (the main opposition party), has put it, the party's decision to be part of Parliament was made by the central committee in 1993.

In Istiqlal Party circles, the note is a polemical one. But that note will truly be sounded with the return of that party's secretary general, M'hamed Boucetta, who, it had been hinted, would head up the new government and who, a few days before the second Filali cabinet was put together, decided to make a pilgrimage to Islam's holy places.

Sudan

Talks Begin With Iraqi State Minister

EA2103213795 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Talks between Iraq and Sudan began at the Friendship Hall today. The Sudanese side was led by Presidential Affairs Minister Awad Ahmad al-Jaz, while Mr. Adnan al-'Ali, the minister of state and adviser to the Iraqi president, led the visiting Iraqi side.

In his remarks at the opening session, Dr. Awad al-Jaz praised the Iraqi people's defiance against the power of world arrogance in spite of the sanctions and hardships facing them. The presidential affairs minister said by exploiting their human and technological resources in their aggression against Iraq, the frenzied forces of aggression have only increased Iraq's power and defiance to overcome the effects of the aggression.

He referred to the common interests linking the Sudanese and Iraqi Governments and peoples in winning back and reuniting the Arab nation, in spite of the difficulties, and the blockade imposed on them. His Excellency said Sudan and Iraq offer the world a model for the rebirth of an Arab and Islamic nation.

Mr. Adnan al-'Ali, the minister of state and adviser to the Iraqi president, said the mutual confidence and responsibility linking Sudan and Iraq serve to boost bilateral cooperation. He stressed that in spite of the blockade, Iraq has managed to overcome many obstacles to reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The two sides will resume talks at the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers at (?1500) today.

Vice President Meets Ethiopian Delegation

EA2103130795 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 2245 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, the first vice president of the Republic, has been briefed on the outcome of a visit by an Ethiopian delegation to Sudan led by the military commander of the central zone bordering the state of al-Qadarif.

The delegation's visit was at the invitation of the al-Qadarif government. The briefing took place when he received the visiting Ethiopian delegation at the Republic Palace in the company of Mr. Sharif Ahmad 'Umar Badr, the governor of al-Qadarif State.

The governor said that the visit lasted five days during which the delegation was acquainted with all the political, economic, and social activities in the three provinces of al-Qadarif State.

He said that a big celebration was organized in al-Fashga, an area where there has traditionally been rivalry in agriculture. He pointed out that agreements concluded between the two countries last year were fruitful. The governor also spoke about the delegation's visit to the Qallabat and Rahad provinces. He said that agreements were reached with the delegation on scientific issues within the scope of relations between the two countries.

Radio Views Kenyan Opposition, Foreign Pressure

EA1703183195 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Mar 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi's call to opposition leader Raila Odinga is not new. The Kenyan president has often warned that the conspiracies being hatched by the opposition with the help of some neighboring countries are primarily designed to serve the interests of foreign states, and that the opposition will be the last to benefit from the result. Moreover instigating internal chaos will not lead the opposition to political power, but rather to increased internal destruction that will serve the interests of foreign quarters. Would it not have been better for the Kenyan opposition to have adopted constructive methods in opposing the government? My colleague Mannan Muhammad Sa'id presents a view on this subject:

[Mannan] The political opposition in African states has not been objective either in its presentation of national problems or in its approach to economic, political, and social problems. It has most often resorted to destructive methods of opposition, which destroy everything. This has been the case in a number of African states, and we do not need to present evidence. Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, and (?Liberia) are all models [word indistinct], in spite of serious attempts made by some countries to heal their internal rifts.

The wooing of the African political opposition by Western powers has [word indistinct] its leaders. In spite of what is said to the effect that African governments do not accept the principle of political opposition, African oppositions do indeed have a forum to express their views. It is regrettable for a particular government's opposition to obtain assistance from a neighboring country with which that government has cooperated and engaged in neighborly relations. What is happening between Sudan and Uganda on the one hand, and between Uganda and Kenya on the other are good examples of this.

Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi this week accused Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga of attempting to stir up chaos in Kenya by using his tribesmen, the Luo, who constitute the majority in the opposition alliance, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Kenya, and of disseminating disinformation on the Moi government's policies toward the country in general, and the Luo in particular. This refutes the claim that the Kenyan president is trying to destroy the tribe, which is dominant in the opposition.

Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi has pointed out that the opposition has been getting support from a neighboring country. This fact clearly demonstrates the lack of confidence between African leaders, who ought to be seeking to liberate their countries from the various forms of political imperialism. There is no doubt that Western countries are fanning the flames of conflict between friendly and neighboring African states in order to gain time to achieve their goals.

The Kenyan opposition, like the Sudanese opposition and others, must struggle to free itself from foreign pressure so that it can express its views openly and freely on what is happening in the country, without becoming a tool serving the interests of Western states. Does the African opposition (?see) this conspiracy and its aftermath?

Al-Bashir Rules Out Military Solution for South

NC1703203795 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sudanese President Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir has said that the solution in south Sudan will only be a peaceful one.

In our interview with our correspondent Fadi Isma'il in Copenhagen, President al-Bashir said that the fighting against the army of John Garang is aimed at convincing him that the military solution is a dead end. He said:

[Begin recording] We are moving in several directions so as to reach the ideal solution. There are political, diplomatic, and military efforts. All these complement each other because the issue is ultimately a political one. The dispute is a political one. We have sought and will seek negotiations with the [Sudanese People's Liberation] Movement. We will continue to negotiate. We have achieved great successes in the negotiations with a number of the movement's leaders who are now convinced. Some of them have started to return to Sudan. Security is being established in very large areas of the south. We do not claim that military action is the solution. This is a guerrilla war and it is difficult for people to talk about decisive military action over the guerrillas. Therefore the solution is a political one. The aim of the military operations is to convince the other side that it too cannot achieve its objectives through a military solution. The other side also believed in the military solution, the military option, and also believed that it could achieve all its objectives, what it called the new Sudan, with the military option. Then came the call for secession. Garang cannot now say that he wants to liberate all Sudan when he is restricted to pockets on the southern borders of south Sudan. The talk about secession and independence thus appeared. Of course this is unacceptable. Sudan is united and will remain so, God willing. [end recording]

Rebels Condemned for Plans To Attack North

EA1803203395 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 18 Mar 95

[Commentary by 'Abd-al-Azim Awad]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The rebel movement informed us through the Western mass media of its intention to carry out acts of sabotage in the capital and the north of the country through special forces prepared for these tasks in coordination and cooperation with the dissolved Ummah Party. The [word indistinct] that are worthy of contemplation by whoever heard or saw the rebel Garang as he was making these statements of his, are represented by the following:

First, merely thinking about resorting to sabotage as a means of reaching one's goal is a frank declaration of failure in military operations by the leaders of the rebellion and an implicit admission of defeat. The failure and defeat of the rebellion has become common knowledge. This was acknowledged by the enemies before the friends [as heard]. Indeed this was, among other things, what compelled some people to shed crocodile tears and to slap their cheeks in support of the rebel movement during its ordeal. Finally, these wretched people embarked on providing military and material support to those miserable people. Hence, the wretched and the miserable met upon the frustration of hope and anticipation of [word indistinct]. Kapoeta was a harsh lesson to the agents, traitors, and hirelings, and their masters abroad. They were taught the lesson by our dauntless armed forces and the mujahidin of the Popular Defense Force. The last Kapoeta battle was a decisive line between the serious-minded and the reckless, between patriots and agents, between loyalty and treachery.

Following this decisive battle, instead of announcing the end of his movement and admitting military and (?political) defeat, Garang now announces the transfer of the battle to the north and Khartoum. Is this not farcical, coming from a slaughtered animal in the throws of death?

Another significant point worthy of attention is the rebel's statement that the members of the mercenary movement and its supporters from the remnants of the dissolved parties are fully aware of the situation in the north and Khartoum. In this they are right because when they left Khartoum some years back they capital city was complaining loudly about a lack of security and stability. The residents could not feel that their homes and families were secure then. In those dark days the rebels used to move about with arrogance and pride to the extent that their leader was encouraged to say that Khartoum was the next target after the southern towns fell in to his (?powerful) grip. He invited his friends to drink coffee with him at al-Matammah [a quarter in Khartoum]. But those dark days will never return, God willing. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Rights Champion Marzouki Prevented From Leaving

LD2003161195 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Tunisia, Moncef Marzouki, the former candidate in the presidential elections, has complained he cannot travel out of his country. This is what he said this morning. Here he is:

[Begin Marzouki recording] I went to Monastir Airport yesterday morning. I intended to travel to Belgium. I was expected at the Tropical Medicine Institute where I was supposed to deliver a series of medical conferences in the framework of usual exchanges. I had obtained all the necessary authorizations, both from the Health Ministry and the Higher Education Ministry, so I thought there would be no problem. My passport was confiscated, and I was told I was not allowed to leave the country.

This is the first time my passport has been withdrawn, but I was already prevented from travelling to the United States last December. You may remember I received a human rights prize from Human Rights Watch. In that particular instance I was not given permission, I was not allowed to leave the country, but I kept my passport. The explanation is that, as you know, I am theoretically on bail because, as you know, I have spent four months in prison since last year because of charges which were totally unfounded. They are going to use this against me for God knows how long to prevent me from going away. Unfortunately, I am not the only one in this situation. There are a number of people in this country—political figures even, lawyers and so on—who do not have any passport, who cannot move about. [end recording]

Bahrain

Reportage on Visit by Defense Secretary Perry

Perry Meets With Amir, Officials

JN2103170495 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1430 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 21 Mar (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain; His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, prime minister; and His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the Bahraini Defense Force; today received William Perry, the U.S. secretary of defense, and the delegation accompanying him on the occasion of his visit to Bahrain.

During the meeting, the amir of Bahrain welcomed the U.S. defense secretary and praised the firm ties between Bahrain and the United States. His highness expressed his satisfaction with the development of bilateral ties in all fields. His highness stressed Bahrain's interest in promoting these relations and cooperation between the two friendly countries in all fields, including the military field. His highness praised the U.S. Administration's wise policy of maintaining the region's security and stability and of serving the issues of security and peace in the world.

The two sides also reviewed bilateral ties and current developments in the region, in addition to a number of Arab and international issues of joint interest, including the Middle East peace process.

The U.S. defense secretary expressed the United States' desire to promote relations of friendship and cooperation with Bahrain in all fields. He also expressed the U.S. Government's desire to promote cooperation with Bahrain. The U.S. secretary praised Bahrain's policy on the Gulf and international levels, and its positive contributions to safeguarding security and stability in the region and to supporting the Middle East peace process.

Attending the meeting were Interior Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin- Khalifah Al Khalifah, Transportation Minister Shaykh 'Ali Bin- Khalifah Al Khalifah, Housing Minister Khalid Bin 'Abdallah Al Khalifah, Defense Minister Staff Lieutenant General Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al Khalifah, and U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain David Robins.

Holds Talks With Defense Minister

JN2103170995 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1445 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 21 Mar (WAKH)—Official talks were held in Manama today between Staff Lieutenant General Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al Khalifah, defense minister and deputy commander in chief of the Bahraini Defense Force, and William Perry, the U.S. secretary of defense, who is currently on a visit to Bahrain.

The two sides reviewed bilateral relations and means of promoting military cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Attending the session of talks were Chief of Staff Major General Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain David Robins, a number of senior officers of the Defense Force, and the delegation accompanying the U.S. defense secretary.

The U.S. secretary has also visited the Defense Force General Command.

Concludes Visit

JN2203082095 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0718 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 22 Mar (WAKH)—U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry left Manama this morning after two-day visit to Bahrain.

During the visit, the U.S. secretary held talks with senior Bahraini officials on cooperation between both friendly countries. He was seen off by Staff Lieutenant General Shaykh Khalifah Bin- Ahmad Al Khalifah, defense minister and deputy commander in chief of the Bahraini Defense Force; Staff Major General Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, chief of staff; and David Robins, U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain.

Kuwait

Perry Cited on Permission for Troops in Qatar

LD2003174495 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of Defense Willian Perry has affirmed the determination of the United States to defend the Arab Gulf states in facing up to the danger that Iraq represents. At a news conference held today at the Ahmad al-Jabir air base, Mr. Perry said that one should distinguish between immediate and future danger, and he stressed that Iraq represented an immediate danger to the Gulf states, while Iran represented a future danger. He affirmed that the Iraqis had rebuilt their military capabilities, and that since last October, they had been showing that they had not learned the lessons of the Kuwait liberation war.

The U.S. defense secretary further said that the United States had secured permission to deploy an American brigade in Qatar in the framework of the strengthening of its military presence in the region.

Oil Workers Strike; Contingency Measures Taken

LD1803150095 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1325 GMT 18 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 18 Mar—Kuwait oil company workers began a strike this morning, and the company launched a previously prepared plan to face up to a strike and ensure continuity of production operations. For his part, Badr al-Khashti, manager of production and export operations at the Kuwait oil company played down the strike of workers at the Production and Maritime Departments, saying that production operations have not been affected and output remains the same due to alternative emergency plans that ensure oil production continuity.

For his part, Muhammad Sarhan, the chairman of the trade union at the company, told KUNA that most the 1,300 workers and white collars at the Production and Maritime Departments have gone on strike and began arriving at 0700 this morning at the headquarters of the General Union of Petrochemicals Workers in al-Ahmadi for a sit-in there. But, in an interview with news agencies this afternoon, Badr al-Khashti stressed that 90 percent of workers at the Maritime Department have worked normally and that most of those on strike were from the Production Department. Mr. al-Khashti affirmed that the company was prepared to face up to the strike and said: If the strike continues for more than a month we are fully prepared to face up to it without any effect on production operations. In this context, the company today resorted to the services of about 300 technicians and workers from the Department of Maintenance and Production Services to replace those on strike.

Badr al-Khashti said: "I refute what the union says about things becoming worse after a few days. The work force that has been called from the Maintenance Department and Production Services is good and has sufficient experience to cover the shortfall." [passage omitted]

For his part, 'Abdallah al-Banay, the director of Human Resources at the Kuwait Oil Company, told reporters that the company management have increased shift hours from eight to 12, beginning from today.

He said: "We hope to contain the problem and solve it amicably without escalating the situation, despite the fact that the law gives us the right to take disciplinary measures regarding the strikers. We hope that we will not be forced to take these measures."

Hamad al-Hajiri, the chairman of the Petroleum Union, told KUNA this morning that maintenance management workers had refused to respond to the company's request to work in place of the strikers because of the dangerous nature of the work, since they were not technicians, "as they themselves said," and did not possess the experience to carry out this activity. This was in addition to the difficulty of doing the two jobs at the same time. Kuwaitis make up 40 percent of the workers in this department.

In reply to a question on the union's intransigent position, the negative impact of the strike on the country's economy, and the decision of the workers to put their personal interests above the public interest, al-Hajiri said: "This responsibility and the ensuing damage to the national economy [as received] is the result of the management's refusal to meet our just demands; these demands are simple and are not unattainable."

He also stressed the solidarity of the remaining unions in the national oil company and the petrochemical company [as received] with the union at the Kuwait Oil Company in its strike. He said: "The number of employees and workers represented by these three unions is about 15,000."

Although Badr al-Shakhti had stated the company's readiness to face up to the strike for over a month, some oil well officials have expressed their doubt about this and told KUNA, "alternatives can be provided but for not more than three days."

In another development, the Kuwait Oil Company gave this exclusive statement to KUNA this afternoon: "The company's management has implemented the necessary work programs and has taken all the necessary precautions, and made all the necessary arrangements to ensure the safety of the production and export operations and maintain their previous levels."

The statement added: "The company states that the production and export operations are continuing normally without any significant disruption thanks to the Kuwaiti youth who, since this morning, took over the responsibility of the operations with the support of a group of specialists."

The conflict between the company and the trade union is centered around the issues of training and grades, and includes a number of professional matters such as "the length of the training programs for workers in some posts and giving workers in specific posts the relevant job grade, in addition to the exclusion of some members of the current work force from promotions.

Oil Minister Calls For End to Strike

LD2003232595 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1941 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait City, 20 Mar (KUNA)—Dr. 'Abd-al-Muhsin Mid'aj, the oil minister and board chairman of the Kuwait Oil Corporation, today called for a quick end to the strike by workers in two departments, "in order to have a chance to discuss their remaining demands."

In a statement to KUNA, he said that he hopes "to see all the workers in the maritime export operations and production department return to their work in order to have a chance to discuss what remains of the demands they seek to achieve." He added that the current strike "damages Kuwait's reputation, harms the interests of the people, and gives the enemy the opportunity to sow discord among the people and shake national unity."

The minister also stressed the need to end this strike "as soon as possible," and expressed "his utmost desire to surmount the obstacles facing some workers in the oil sector and to find appropriate and rapid solutions to their problems." He said that he supports those workers' demand "to enjoy all their rights as defined by the laws and regulations in force." Minister Mid'aj said that he stated this position during a meeting yesterday with the trade union representing workers in the Kuwait Oil Company and the Petroleum Workers Union.

The minister concluded his statement by praising workers in the Kuwait Oil Company for their efforts during the strike to ensure a continuous flow of oil, which he described as the artery of the country's economic life. [passage omitted]

Sentences for Attempted Bush Assassination Upheld

LD2003122695 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1140 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 20 Mar (KUNA)—The court of cassation, which is the highest judicial authority, today upheld the death sentence against the two Iraqis accused of attempting to assassinate former U.S. President George Bush during his visit to Kuwait in 1993.

Court sources said that the judicial body upheld the sentence of execution previously passed by the State Security Court against Ra'd 'Abd-al- Amir al-Asadi and Wali al-Ghazali, who have confessed that the Iraqi intelligence service commissioned them to assassinate President Bush and carry out acts of sabotage. The two Iraqi defendants were part of a sabotage network comprising 14 people whom the Kuwaiti security authorities arrested before the American president's visit to Kuwait. The sources said that the Court of Cassation [supreme court of appeal] today commuted the death sentences passed on four defendants—three Iraqis and a Kuwaiti.

The three Iraqis are Salim Nasir, Bandar 'Ujayl, and 'Adil Isma'il. The death sentences passed on the first two were commuted to life imprisonment and deportation after serving the sentences, and 15 years in prison for the third. The death sentence passed on Kuwaiti national Badr Jiyad was commuted to five years in prison and a fine of 1,000 dinars.

The sources said that the brother of Kuwaiti defendant Badr Jiyad, who is called Salim, was acquitted. A sentence of five years imprisonment had been passed on him.

The Court of Cassation sources said that the court reduced a 12- year sentence passed on Ahmad Jabbar Habib, an Iraqi national, to five years and upheld the four-year sentence passed on 'Ali Khudayyir, an Iraqi national.

The State Security Court had passed sentences on the sabotage network of 14 people last year. Those nine above appealed, while the rest have started serving the sentences passed on them

The rulings of the Cassation are final and irreversible, except for the death penalty which the amir has the right to endorse, change, or reject.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Defense Secretary Perry

LD1803220795 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2130 GMT 18 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 18 Mar (SPA)—King Fahd Bin- 'Abd-al-Aziz Al-Sa'ud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, may God protect him, received at his office in al-Salam Palace in Jeddah today His Excellency U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry and his accompanying delegation.

The U.S. defense secretary conveyed to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques greetings and regards from His Excellency President Bill Clinton, the U.S. President.

The meeting was attended by Muhammad 'Ibrahim Mas'ud, cabinet member and acting information minister, 'Uthman al-Hamid, deputy minister of defense and aviation for military affairs, and Raymond Mabus, U.S. ambassador to the Kingdom.

King, Clinton Discuss Security, Relations on Phone

LD2103122395 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, had a telephone conversation last night with His Excellency Bill Clinton, the U.S. President. During the conversation, a review of the latest developments in the Arab and international arenas was made in a bid to grasp everything that might secure the security and the stability of the Gulf region.

The two leaders also praised the relations and the old bonds of friendship between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States and dealt with everything that might benefit the two countries' common interests.

CDLR Statement on Peaceful Protests

MS2003094495 London CDLR MONITOR in English 18 Mar 95

[Statement issued by the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia (CDLR); issued on 18 March—received by fax 20 March]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

CDLR: "sit-in" successful

In response to the call of CDLR, a large crowd of people assembled in Sahaykh al-Tarayi's Mosque in the centre of Riyadh, yesterday, 17 March 1995, immediately after the Friday prayer. This congregation of people participated in the "sit-in" for one whole hour, as instructed by the Committee. There was no confrontation between the security forces and the protestors. The number of participants in the mosque was estimated to be approximately two thousand people. Around six hundred of them insisted on remaining in the mosque after the end of the "sit-in" hour. They later departed in an orderly and disciplined manner.

The regime instructed the security men who where present in force both inside and outside the mosque to wear civilian clothing in order to avoid the appearance of a large military presence in front of the international press and media. The anti-riot forces were situated two km from the mosque itself. Several days prior to the protest, the intelligence forces took control of neighbouring buildings to use them as surveillance points, and also to prevent the buildings from being used by the opposition.

At the same time in Jiddah and Hail, similar protests were taking place. As in Riyadh there were no confrontations.

In Buraydah, despite the committee's appeal not to organise any protest, the authorities still deployed a large contingent of security forces.

Despite the lack of any protest taking place, the security forces were particularly heavy handed with residence and worshipers for no apparent reason.

The committee intends to call for more peaceful protests and public activities, both at home and abroad during the coming weeks. London 18/3/1995

CDLR Bulletin on Arrests of Reform Figures

MS2003164195 London CDLR MONITOR in English 10 Mar 95

[Bulletin No. 38 of the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia (CDLR); issued on 10 March—received by fax 19 March]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Your Right To Know—Despite Renewed Arrests, Protest to Go Ahead...

Two days ago the Committee issued a communique regarding the recent escalation of a new campaign of arrests against prominent Islamic figures beginning with Muhammad al-Qahtani, Bishr al-Bishr and Sa'id Bin-Zu'ayr. A search is still proceeding for Shaykh Nasir al-'Umar.

The Committee has been informed that these detentions are only an introduction to a wider campaign to arrest other reform figures amongst the Scholars and University professors. After the continued insistence of al Sa'ud in suppressing, any type of reform, we would like to question those who still think well of the oppressors and tyrants, and who take the burden of defending them, apologising for them and who pervert legitimate texts into obscure, distorted statements in order to justify and defend the crimes of the regime, as to whether these latest events are enough to convince them of the hopeless task they are clinging on to.

We would also question as to whether these current events are enough to convince those who refuse and reject the regime's actions, but who believe the solution to the problem is simply making Du'a in the corners of a mosque, or in depending on Shaykh Ibn-Baz's efforts, rather than participation in public protests, about which they have reservations.

O Brothers and Sisters, due to these latest arrests, the anger and enthusiasm of the youth has risen. Also, due to the continued requests of some regions to widen the circle of protests and "sit- ins," and their insistence on the designation of venues in their own towns and cities, as well as their threats to take such steps into their own hands if the Committee does not take the initiative, the Committe has therefore decided to respond to some of those urgent requests and have agreed to designate the following mosques for "Sit-in" protests:—Buraydah—al-Thiyab (the grand) Mosque and Hail al-Hags Mosque. The Committee insists on the necessity for the Brothers to be extremely vigilant in case of any last minute changes of venues and times.

Some of our Brothers mentioned the possibility that the authorities may close those mosques or the surrounding roads, in order to prevent the protests from taking place. In answer to this, we must not fear this happening, as such actions by the authorities would be conclusive evidence of the Government's fear, and would be the first major sign of success for the protest project. However, an alternative list of substitute mosques will be published in the event of such action by the authorities.

Also mentioned by some of the Brothers, was the possibility of al Sa'ud assigning certain speakers in those mosques on the day of the protests, in an attempt to dissuade people from participating in the protest. In answer to this, we would actually welcome such action, as it is an indirect advertisement to the legitimate leaders. We are certain that the Brothers participating are fully aware of the realities and would not be affected by empty persuasion.

Some of those who contacted us expressed their sympathy for the Committee and its future, as they believe that the success of the project requires the gathering of hundreds of thousands of people, and they fear that such a huge presence may not be possible. In answer to this, we thank those brothers for their sympathy, but we would request them to be more practical, as they must realise that the protest will not need such huge numbers. Nevertheless, the supportive and positive communications to the protest received by the Committee are many, and the readiness and preparation is excellent, and this is what has encouraged the Committee to include other regions in the project. This was as well as the fact that the on-going discussions amongst the people regarding the various methods of peaceful and legitimate protests at various meeting places, is in itself a success for the reform process, as it transfers the Nation from engaging in everyday gossip about negligible personal problems, to discussion and debate about important national issues, the nations destiny, and also how to deal with the many problems.

We would repeat our call to the youth to control and discipline themselves, and to avoid any unnecessary, militant actions. We would also like to confirm to the Brothers who enquired about any militant activities, that we believe, that such energy and enthusiasm would be put to better use in speaking-out the truth and leading protests and gatherings in a calm and dignified manner.

The Committee would also like to indicate that our call is not directed to the youth of the Islamic reform exclusively, but is directed to the whole Nation. The people of the country are all Muslims and the overwhelming majority of them would not think twice about the supremacy of the Islamic Shari'ah and the respect of reformers and scholars, and they would never accept such a chaotic situation in leadership, policies, and the decline of the economy and security.

The general public is well aware that the reform scholars were arrested because of their efforts to save the country from the inevitable collapse it now faces.

By the blessings of Allah, the regime has resorted to facing the reformers at the lowest depth of the economic, political security and military decline and during the spread of moral and social disintegration amongst the royal family and their cronies. The people themselves have suffered greatly as a consequence of al Sa'ud's actions.

Despite this new campaign, however, we feel optimistic and we believe that these actions are very clear and conclusive evidence of the complete bankruptcy of al Sa'ud in every aspect of their lives.

News Al- Mas'ari's Appeal...

The Home Office Court of Appeal have decided upon the invalidity of the Home Office decision to refuse Dr. Mas'ari's political asylum application and eventual deportation.

The statement of judgement released today, mentioned that the evidence presented by the Home Office was flimsy and insubstantial.

'Abd-al-Aziz The Crown Prince?

The Committee has learned from very private sources that a President of a large Arab country was the one behind the advise of King Fahd to appoint his son Abdul-Aziz as his consultant in order for this to be the first step towards his eventual appointment as Crown Prince.

The President promised King Fahd to prepare the way for this appointment by convincing the Americans and neighbouring counties of the benefits of such a move.

The committee has also come to know that the above mentioned President received large sums of money for himself and his family as a token of gratitude for his efforts on behalf of King Fahd. This President is certainly well aware of the unlikelihood of such a move, but he purposefully intended to embezzle the King through the King's exaggerated feelings towards his son, Abdul-Aziz.

However, one of the influential western countries leaked information regarding this subject to other members of the family. This has caused an acrimonious dispute within al Sa'ud which led the King to the necessity of having to swear on oath to a complete rebuttal and denial of such intentions.

The Western Media and The Fragility of the Regime...

The many and varied scandals pertaining to al Sa'ud provide a rich vein of material for the western media. Many popular magazines and newspapers are still discussing the decline of the Saudi economy and the policies of the country, as well as the Islamic reform opposition.

Another source of material is the internal feuding amongst the members of al Sa'ud.

In Paris, Le Bois magazine, a widely distributed publication, published two large articles in one issue, where it discussed in detail the chaos within the royal family, the incredible amounts of money squandered by them and the administrative mismanagement, which has led directly to the present disgraceful economic collapse and the rise of the Islamic opposition.

The American "Time" magazine also published an article with a photograph of Shaykh Salman al-'Awdah at one of his lectures. The article raised the important question of the reality of the stability of the regime and its ability to confront the rising tide of Islamic opposition.

A few days ago, the London Observer published an article about Abdul-Aziz Ibn Fahd and the writer mentioned several critical facts. (A translation of the article is included with the bulletin).

This particular article infuriated King Fahd and he immediately called the main members of the ruling family for a meeting to investigate how such information could have been leaked. The King also contacted an important figure in the Saudi Arabian Embassy in London and subjected that person to a vehement tirade of insults and abuse due to his failure to prevent the appearance of such damaging articles.

The King then decided to bring Bandar Ibn-Sultan to London in the belief that he would succeed in preventing any further articles of this nature. Fahd appears to have forgotten that Bandar had failed to prevent an even stronger campaign in the U.S.A., where articles appeared in quick succession in American publications such as the Los Angeles Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Christian Science Monitor and more recently in Time International Magazine.

If the King had taken the time to consult the Committee, we would have replied that Al-Qasaybi is less of a failure than Bandar in preventing adverse press campaigns. The information of which the King is apparently unaware, is that the Committee played a great role in the current press campaign, and soon there will be a large article in Spanish published in a Spanish newspaper with a large circulation in Spain and Latin America.

Thus, the scandals of al Sa'ud and the credibility of the Islamic opposition are now widely read in all the major languages in the West.

We believe that the western media will not exhaust its hunger for al Sa'ud's scandals, as these scandals are a gift and continue to provide journalists with newsworthy stories.

It is expected that a large British newspaper will next week publish details of a scandal relating to one of the leading princes.

In respect to this, we would alert the rulers once again to the folly of instigating a press war, and that they should be aware that their media empire has disintegrated and the huge funding available to them will be of no use while it is squandered on lies and fabrications.

The next step for the Committee's media programme will be television documentaries, which will be starting soon in Sha'Allah to run alongside the press campaign.

Gifts by force...

Amongst the most recent activities of al Sa'ud is the new trend of "Gifts by force," where one of the princes will request a company of say furniture, decoration, clothes or car sales to supply him with the latest products, to his specifications, on a "buy now pay later" basis. When the said prince received the goods he will then delay payment for evermore, or tell the owner of the company to cancel the invoice and to consider the goods as a gift to the prince.

This trend has spread to the extent that for most traders their greatest nightmare is when a prince expresses an interest in their products. This has caused a wave of resentment amongst traders and businessmen because of their feelings of weakness in being unable to force payment.

Children Imprisoned Again...

In previous bulletins we published reports of the detentions of children as part of the campaign against reform. We believed that Nayif would have been deterred from taking any further actions of this kind, but it would seem that Nayif and his brothers are bereft of any human feelings or compassion.

During last week Fahd al-Mushaiti, age 11 years, and Mansur al- Buraydi, age 12 years, were detained in Buraydah and charged with carrying leaflets that had angered al Sa'ud.

It would seem that al Sa'ud have conveniently forgotten that they are repeating the crimes of Saddam, against whom they have previously fought and they have also forgotten that their newspapers, even today, still criticise his actions.

Saddam's Methods Employed by al Sa'ud...

Despite the failure of the hostage method, as used on Dr. Muhammad al-Mass'ari, when his son was detained in his place, the authorities appear to be repeating the same method again with Shaykh Nasser al-Umar, where his son, Ahmad, has been taken as a hostage until his father is found and detained.

This is further proof of al Sa'ud's desperate and immoral tactics against the reformers.

Egyptian Manpower Not a Priority...

Despite the special treatment Egypt receives since the Gulf Crisis, the Egyptian labour employed in the Kingdom suffers greatly, as do other nationalities, due to the economic crisis. The Egyptian Embassy transferred a vast number of complaints to Egypt regarding the non-payment of wages and general humiliations and discrimination etc.

The Egyptian authorities, after great pressure, resorted to spending a special delegation to investigate the complains and to meet the relevant officials in the Kingdom. However, the delegation returned empty handed and discovered the fact that as the Kingdom, is under siege by a barrage of desperate problems, the plight of Egyptian workers is inconsequential and is not in any way considered a priority.

Despite the secrecy surrounding this news, various details related to it created an angry outburst in the Egyptian press.

Two Stands...

After the failure of the rulers to force the two Shaykhs, Safar and Salman, to provide pledges of non-involvement in the reform movement, al Sa'ud resorted, as expected, to Shaykh Ibn-Baz, in order to use him to pressurise the Shaykhs into co-operating with the requests of the rulers.

Shaykh Ibn-Baz visited the two Shaykhs in prison in a pathetic attempt to convince them to sign the pledges. The Shaykhs answered Ibn-Baz with great dignity and made it crystal clear to him that signing any such guarantees would be a fate worse than death. The Shaykhs also expressed their deep disappointment with Ibn-Baz for his actions in support of the authorities.

In fact, Shaykh Safar al-Hawwali was much more frank and precise in placing the responsibility for the Government's use of Ibn-Baz's fatwas for their own ends squarely on the Shaykhs own shoulders.

People of Kuwait Refuse al Sa'uds Islam...

The followers of 'Al-Jamiyyah group in Kuwait declared their intention to hold a spring camp to receive a group of leading figures from the 'Al-Jamiyyah group of Saudi Arabia. The most important figures invited are 'Abdul-Aziz al-'Askar and Muhammad al- Madkhali. Various observers in Kuwait believe that such a delegation is an attempt by the Saudi authorities to penetrate the Kuwaiti society and to spread al Sa'ud's version of Islam after their failure to cancel the Nations Council and other public institutions in Kuwait.

Free Advertisement for the Committee...

In the two sacred Mosques, during the month of Ramadan, a booklet was distributed with the title "The Obligation of Obeying the Leaders As long As They Obey God." In this booklet, a number of fatwas against the Committee were printed.

The Committee welcomed this step by al Sa'ud's scholars, as this represents a free advertisement for the Committee as the readers are well aware of the Committee's reality and the reality of the fatwas.

Funeral Procession or Silent Protest...

Last week, the people of Qasim escorted the funeral procession of Shaykh Salih al-Khuraysy to his final resting place. A huge crowd gathered for the funeral and was estimated to consist of more than 15000 people. The huge presence was the people of Qasim's form of expression of their appreciation towards the heroic and brave stands of the deceased Shaykh. May Allah bless him, which he took with everyone he dealt with from al Sa'ud.

The Shaykh led the first protest demonstration during the reign of King Faysal. Despite the reservations of some scholars as to the intentions behind that demonstration, everyone agrees on respecting that brave stand which has been nearly forgotten.

People present in the procession confirmed that this huge number of people gathered in a short space of time, with the telephone used as the main means of communication.

Greetings to the people of Ha'il...

In a brilliant move, the people of Ha'il expressed their rejection to al Sa'ud's scholars at the Eid prayer, when the majority of worshipers left immediately and boycotted the speech when they realised that the authorities had intervened and changed the preferred speaker.

This took place in the north Eid prayer location of Ha'il, when the Prince of the area instructed the removal of the reputable Shaykh al-Fayiz and replace him with Shaykh al-Ubaylan.

After the prayer, a group of people stood up and expressed their disgust and resentment at such action and requested the worshipers to express their objection and rejection to what had occurred.

The response was immediate, as 80 per cent of the worshipers left immediately, while vocally expressing their resentment.

United Arab Emirates

U.S. Defense Secretary Perry Arrives on Visit

JN2203095795 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0920 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 22 Mar (WAKH)—U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry arrived in Abu Dhabi this morning for a brief visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] as part of a regional tour.

He was welcomed on arrival by Staff Lieutenant General Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, chief of staff of the Armed Forces; a number of Armed Forces senior officers; the UAE ambassador to the United States; and the U.S. ambassador to the UAE.

Zayid Receives Perry

JN2203102495 Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates Radio Network in Arabic 0930 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This morning, His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the country, received His Excellency U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry, who is currently visiting the country. They met at the Rawdat al-Rif rest house.

The meeting's discussions covered developments in the Gulf region and the Middle East, as well as international developments and ways to enhance bilateral relations. [passage omitted]

Heir Apparent Inaugurates Defense Expo

JN1903110295 Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates Radio Network in Arabic 0930 GMT 19 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, Abu Dhabi's heir apparent and the deputy supreme commander of the Armed Forces, this morning inaugurated the International

Defense Expo, IDEX 95, at the fair site in Abu Dhabi. The ceremony was attended by His Highness General Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Rashid Al Maktum, Dubayy's heir apparent and defense minister. [passage omitted]

Iranian Defense Minister Visits, Holds Talks

LD2203083295 Tehran IRNA in English 0750 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Abu Dhabi (UAE), March 22, IRNA—Visiting Iranian Minister of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics, Mohammad Foruzandeh, and U.A.E. Heir Apparent and Defense Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Rashid Al Maktum here Tuesday [21 March] conferred on Tehran-Dubai relations as well as regional and international developments.

The two sides at the meeting considered the holding of mutual talks as the only way to get over any possible disputes.

Foruzandeh is here to take part in the biennial 'Idex 95' military exhibit, which was inaugurated on Sunday.

Over 600 companies from 41 countries have put their military hardware on show at the five-day exposition.

Yemen

Authorities Deny Aden Airport Shelling Reports

NC1803082395 Paris AFP in English 0804 GMT 18 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, March 18 (AFP)—Yemeni authorities on Saturday [18 March] denied that an army commander had ordered his troops to shell Aden airport in protest at his transfer to the capital Sanaa.

"These reports are baseless and the shots heard Tuesday by inhabitants were part of live-fire military exercises far from Aden airport," the head of civil aviation, Muhsin al-Yusufi, told AFP.

The Arab daily AL-HAYAH reported Friday that the commander of a military camp in the southern city of Aden ordered the shelling of the airport. Several shells landed near the runway, the paper said quoting witnesses.

A defence ministry official who asked not to be named said the fire was part of "exercises carried out by an anti-aircraft defence unit."

'Aziz Accuses CIA, U.S. Security Services of Lies

BR2003151595 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 18 Mar 95 p 15

[Interview with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by Fabio Scuto in Rome; date not given: "Friend Italy, Help Us"; first paragraph is LA REPUBBLICA introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rome—"We have granted the United Nations our complete cooperation, and now we expect that the special committee monitoring our military arsenals will recommend next month that the embargo be lifted. The charges leveled at us are the result of CIA propaganda. Whenever sanctions against Iraq are discussed, it is the time for disclosures about attacks, hidden missiles, and the 100 and more coups that the U.S. secret services claim there have been since 1991. The UN sanctions now have no juridical legitimacy." Tariq 'Aziz, the Iraqi regime's second-in- command and long-standing aide to the rais, Saddam Husayn, has not changed. He still looks like some modest high school teacher, with his broad, almost paternal, smile, and his big square spectacles that look like car headlights. He is the man in charge of delicate missions, the strategist, the persuader, the astute and indefatigable diplomat. Saddam shouts, threatens, and attacks. He mediates, negotiates, and tries to put the pieces back together. He owes his reputation as an nonconformist liberal to the fact that he is the only Christian in the rais' court. 'Aziz is moderate only in word, in his serious and calm tone of voice, however; because behind his words lies a wall of reinforced concrete.

[Scuto] Iraq's hopes of seeing the UN embargo lifted depend on the report on its military arsenals that the special monitoring committee will present next month. Do you think the report will be favorable?

['Aziz] We have cooperated fully with the UN inspectors on the main issues—ballistic, chemical, and nuclear weapons. There remains the issue of bacteriological weapons, which we will discuss 24 March, and I have no doubt that we will receive a positive response. I repeat, we have cooperated with the UN committee, and if the U.S. pressure on the Security Council ceases, we will surmount this obstacle too.

[Scuto] Minister 'Aziz, what about the chemical weapons hidden in northern Iraq?

['Aziz] Those are lies. The American secret services spread these lies. When the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Mrs. Albright, came to Rome she showed members of the Italian Government satellite photographs of buildings, claiming that they proved that Iraq was rearming. Those buildings are the same ones monitored by the United Nations, so where is the secrecy?

[Scuto] What is your opinion of Italy's position on the embargo? Thursday you met with Foreign Minister Agnelli. Is there any hope of a change of Italy's position within the United Nations?

['Aziz] First, there has been this meeting with your foreign minister, Susanna Agnelli. This means that the Italian Government has decided, for the first time since the war, to resume relations. Of course, I cannot predict how Italy will vote next time in the Security Council but I hope that Rome will adopt a fair position based on the juridical legitimacy of the UN resolutions. We consider this a constructive position. Be that as it may, it is well known that the lifting of the embargo against Iraq would benefit Italy's economic interests. So I say that a legitimate position and the important interests at stake could influence a government decision.

[Scuto] You are trying to impart a reassuring image of your country. Thursday you visited the pope, and he condemned the embargo which "punishes" the Iraqi people. But what guarantees can you give the West?

['Aziz] The pope is a guide for millions of people around the world, and when he sides against the embargo he is supporting a legitimate cause. Iraq was at war with Iran for eight years, then there have been these five years of embargo. Obviously, as far as I am concerned, all revenue must be directed toward alleviating our people's difficult situation—agriculture, services, and civilian industry. Of course, every country pays attention to its security. The situation with Iran remains very tense, so it is legitimate for us to allocate resources to defense. The United Nations does not forbid us to do so; it merely talks about eliminating mass destruction weapons. I know Iran well, and I can tell you that it is a real threat to everyone—not only to my country but to all the states of the Persian Gulf. The Americans look on, but do nothing. In fact the Iranian threat helps them to sell even more weapons to these countries.

[Scuto] How do you judge certain countries that waged war on you five years ago and that now come to Baghdad to try to do business?

['Aziz] Interstate relations must be governed not by feelings but by legitimate interests. We want to reopen our doors to all the Western countries, including the United States, with which we maintained excellent relations in the eighties.

[Scuto] It is five years since the Gulf War, long enough to form a dispassionate opinion: Was the invasion of Kuwait a mistake?

['Aziz] The invasion of Kuwait is only one part of the story. I can tell you that Iraq did not want war. It is necessary to consider who instigated that response. Bush wanted to impose a new world order in the political field, and in the economic field he wanted complete U.S. control over the oil fields.

[Scuto] The Iraqi opposition announced last night that Uday [name as published], President Saddam's favorite son, was seriously wounded in an attack...

['Aziz] This, like many others, is a huge lie, fabricated by the CIA.

INA: U.S. Authorities Deny Barzan al-Tikriti Entry Visa

JN1803093595 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 18 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 18 Mar (INA)—Iraq has accused the United States of violating the UN headquarters agreement by refusing to grant some Iraqi officials entry visas to carry out missions related to the United Nations.

In a letter he sent yesterday to UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations, said that these U.S. practices, which violate its ethical and legal obligations as stipulated in the UN headquarters agreement and the UN Charter, indicate a serious breach which must be addressed by all possible means.

He said that Iraq's permanent mission to the United Nations on 1 February submitted a request to the U.S. permanent mission to grant Ambassador Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, Iraq's permanent envoy to the UN European Headquarters in Geneva, an entry visa to participate in a high-level Iraqi delegation to the UN Security Council. That delegation, headed by deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, left for New York to attend the Security Council's periodic review of the sanctions which took place on 13 March.

He added that the competent U.S. authorities refused to grant the Iraqi official an entry visa without giving any reasons.

Clandestine Radio Issues Communique on 'Victory'

NC1903171595 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1533 GMT 19 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the Merciful and compassionate; against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemy of God and your enemy. In truth spoke the Almighty. [Koranic verse]

O honorable brother and sister sons of Iraq; O proud Kurdish people; O peshmerga heroes, who are taking their positions in the trenches of pride to perform the sacred duty of defending Kurdistan:

The criminal 'Aflaqis were tempted once again and owned by Satan when they tried their luck in Kurdistan in a lowly and desperate attempt to occupy it and engage its brave peshmergas and the loyal heroes of the Unified Iraqi National Congress in grinding battles.

They massed their troops on the contact lines of the liberated areas of Kurdistan at the direct orders of isolated dictator Saddam Husayn and directed their barbaric bombardment at the densely populated areas and the defensive trenches of the peshmerga fighters of Kurdistan, supported by tanks, armored vehicles, and helicopters. They imagined that the great Kurdish people, who rejected them completely at the time of the historic exodus of 1 million people, will surrender to the dictatorship once again to be tied with its fetters and their sanctities violated.

This is far from the criminal 'Aflaqis. Woe to the midgets who are trying to oppose the will of the Kurdish people. Woe to those who plan a showdown with great, proud Kurdistan and its sons.

The noble sons and brave peshmergas of Kurdistan are determined to challenge the dictatorship to defend the people of Kurdistan and their democratic march. They are determined to teach the enemies and the 'Aflaqi Ba'thist occupation army lessons in resistance and lightning operations.

As you know brothers and sisters, the peshmergas of Kurdistan and the loyals of the Unified Iraqi National Congress have risen through heroic, outstanding operations to strike with a (blessed) iron fist at the dens of the 'Aflaqite enemy, abort its schemes and conspiracies, and destroy its assembly points and castles, inflicting heavy losses and crushing defeats on the enemy.

O free men in our wounded Iraq wherever you might be; it seems that the members of the criminal clique in Baghdad have not learned their lesson from the past. It seems that the successive blows the eagles of Kurdistan dealt to them and the [word indistinct] of the opposition have not taught them enough lessons yet. They continued to mass their troops, bombard residential areas, and launch blatant aggression against the well-secured trenches of the peshmergas of Kurdistan.

As usual, the Voice of the People of Kurdistan, the voice of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, always reports news of the triumphs of the peshmergas of Kurdistan and the destruction of the 'Aflaqite dens of crime. This time, the radio will broadcast news of a great and overwhelming victory by the peshmergas of Kurdistan, the defenders of the homeland and freedom and the men of critical historic moments.

Relying on God almighty and on the great Kurdish people, a joint force from the peshmerga of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Kurdish Communist Party, the Kurdish Socialist Democratic Party, the Kurdish Democrats Movement, and the supporters of the Unified Iraqi National Congress launched a large- scale offensive against the dens of the oppressive 'Aflaqite enemy on the night of 18-19 March and dealt a crushing strike against its aggressive forces concentrated in the (Banmaqan) and the (Qarahandir) area in the Kurdish Governorate of Karkuk. The offensive focused on the following axes:

First, the (Nawshwan) axis from which an assault was launched by the peshmerga against the first regiment of the 7th brigade of the 'Aflaqaite Iraqi Army.

Second, the Darband-Qara Wais axis on the highway leading to (Qra'njir) area and the (Banmaqan) area

Third, the (Khidr Zindah axis) [words indistinct] surrounding the headquarters of the dictatorial regime forces in the same area.

Fourth, the Qara Wais axis from which a joint force proceeded toward the [words indistinct].

Our heroic forces dealt crushing blows to the 'Aflaqite regime forces stationed in these areas and inflicted on them heavy losses in lives and equipment and controlled all the headquarters of the enemy forces. They also took a large number of prisoners who refused to resist their brother peshmerga and surrendered to our forces. Our forces captured a huge quantity of heavy and light arms and various military equipment. The enemy losses on the battlefront were as follows:

Our forces controlled the headquarters of three regiments, six companies, and 52 enemy posts. Our forces destroyed two tanks and took 118 prisoners, including a number of officers. Our forces killed dozens of enemy personnel who insisted on resistance.

Our heroic forces captured the following equipment: Two tanks, one armored vehicle which were taken to the back lines, three heavy artillery pieces, two 57-mm antiaircraft guns, three 37-mm antiaircraft guns, five 120-mm mortal guns, 17 60-mm mortar guns, 15 82-mm mortar guns, 9 rocket launchers, two 14.5-mm Dimitrov machine guns, two DSHK machine guns, 19 RPG rocket launchers, seven sniper rifles, nine rifles, 16 radios of various types, one (Roset) radio set, five automatic rifles, 290 light Kalashnikov machine guns, one revolver, and four binoculars.

Our losses were nine peshmerga martyrs who gave their lives for Kurdistan. Glory and immortality for their pure souls and the martyrs of Kurdistan. O peshmerga and protectors of Kurdistan, blessed by your arms.

Kurdish Areas Reportedly Shelled by Government Troops

NC2103155395 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The fascist regime's forces shelled the main road between (Mujamma' Shurash) and the Chamchamal district in the Karkuk Governorate yesterday morning.

The barbaric shelling hit a vehicle carrying a number of passengers, injuring two of them.

At the same time, the regime's helicopters shelled the (Binkura) area as the artillery opened a fierce bombardment of the villages of Gwarah and Shirwan but caused no casualties.

It is recalled that these are liberated areas in the Qada' Khanaqin.

The regime's artillery also shelled the (Taflaq) area, the village of al-Shaykh Zayn, and the (Qaranaw) plain for one hour at 1600 yesterday. There were no casualties other than some material damages.

IBC Reports on Turkish Troop Movements

LD2103171395 London Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation Press Release in English 1703 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Received by fax]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Salah al-Din, Iraq (21 March)—Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation correspondents in northern Iraq today reported the following developments related to the Turkish invasion on northern Iraq.

Turkish paratroopers were dropped in the Sarsang district in the villages of Aradain and Eneshkie 25 km northeast of Dohuk.

Turkish forces tried to advance by tank toward the district of Shiranish northeast of Zakho but they met with heavy resistance from the PKK [Kurdistan Workers Party].

House-to-house searches were carried out in the villages around Zakho and arrests were made.

Bombardment from the air continues in the Khamtir Mountain area near Zakho.

Air bombardment has also taken place around the villages of Khwakurk and Sidakan near the Iran-Iraq border.

INA Cites Russian Spokesman on Weapons, Turkish Operation

NC2103213495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2035 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Mar (INA)—The Russian Foreign Ministry's official spokesman today stated that statements have recently been made in the United States that the Iraqis, in violation of their obligations under the Security Council resolutions, are taking measures in several parts of the country to rebuild centers for the production of ballistic missiles and also to rebuild plants for the production of chemical weapons.

The spokesman added that the UN Special Commission for the Disarmament of Iraq, led by Rolf Ekeus, is the one that made the recent conclusions regarding Iraq's compliance with the disarmament aspects as stipulated under Resolution 687. As it is clear from the interpretations made by representatives of this commission, the centers subject of the U.S. accusations are placed under the constant monitoring of the Special Commission. Video cameras and other special equipment have been placed at these sites, and the Special Commission has not registered any illegal activity in these or other sites under control. The representatives of the Special Commission confirm that the Iraqi side continues to cooperate positively toward completing the construction of a comprehensive system for controlling and monitoring Iraq's military programs, the spokesman added.

Concerning the Turkish military operation in northern Iraq, the Russian Foreign Ministry's spokesman stated that the Russian Foreign Ministry and the Russian embassy in Ankara are following with interest the developments regarding the operation, which started on 20 March. According to information received from the Turkish side through diplomatic channels on the eve of the operation, it is an operation limited in time and space that seeks to destroy bases and assembly points of extremist Kurds engaged in an armed struggle against Turkey. The spokesman added: We trust, as stipulated in the Turkish Foreign Ministry statement on 20 March, that the Turkish side will pull out the Turkish units back to its territory after carrying out the mission assigned to them without inflicting any harm on the civilian inhabitants or on Iraq's territorial integrity and sovereignty. In our vision of the Kurdish problem, we proceed first and foremost from the need to maintain the territorial integrity of the countries that suffer from this problem and view it as a domestic issue of the countries concerned.

Army 'Defectors' on Deployment of Government Forces

LD2103224695 London Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation Press Release in English 2220 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Received by fax]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Salah al-Din, Iraq (21 March)—An Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation [IBC] correspondent reports that defectors from the Iraqi army have confirmed that the 38th Division has been removed from the front lines because its forces have been depleted by opposition retaliation to the regime's attacks during the last two weeks. IBC correspondents also report that the 2nd Division of the Iraqi army has been removed from Qarah Hinjirah sector near Karkuk for the same reasons.

The 38th Division has been replaced by the 7th Division which has been brought from al-'Amarah in southern Iraq.

The 16th, 38th and 39th Brigades of the 7th Division are all deployed in northern Iraq and have confronted forces loyal to the INC [Iraqi National Congress] in Irbil sector.

The defectors also reported that a number of soldiers of the deserted on the way from al-'Amarah to northern Iraq because they did not want to fight against the opposition.

Clearly, evidence is mounting that the Iraqi army is rapidly deteriorating.

KDP Political Bureau Calls For End to Turkish Incursion

JN2203073795 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A spokesman for the Kurdistan Democratic Party Political Bureau has stated that a large Turkish military force entered the Iraqi Kurdistan territory through Zakho and other border areas yesterday to pursue the PKK [Kurdistan Workers Party] forces.

We would like to state that had no prior knowledge about this operation, which is similar to operations of recent years. Like any military invasions, such operation will harm the civilians among our population.

We have repeatedly appealed to both sides not to transfer their disputes to our territory, and we strongly repeat this appeal once again.

Such actions harm our country's national sovereignty and cause us concern. These actions require denunciation, and we call for ending them as soon as possible.

[Dated] 21 March 1995.

KDP Claims Successes Against PUK After Banjwin 'Liberation'

JN2203103895 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Honorable citizens; heroic Kurdistan fighters. We have received the news of the liberation of (Nalpariz). As we announced after the liberation of Banjwin, its hills, and the entire Banjwin area, our heroic fighters in the field command launched a devastating attack along four axes toward (Nalpariz), the only area which has not been cleansed of the Jalalis [Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, forces]. These axes are:

1. The Banjwin-(Sharpazir) axis from the mountain toward (Nalpariz).

2. The joint force of the Banjwin and (Nalpariz) axes from Kani Manqah toward (Nalpariz).

3. The special force of the field command and its branches from the hills behind (Nalpariz) toward (Nalpariz).

4. The fourth axis from the Sayyid Sadiq-(Nalpariz) road directly toward (Nalpariz).

5. The Banjwin-(Sharpazir) force controlled the (Nalpariz)- Qal'ah Chulan.

With this unique military program, our heroic peshemergas in the field command moved at 1200 and launched a devastating attack on the Jalali mercenaries. They hardly stood for two hours in the face of our heroic peshemrga. They fled toward their cheap positions in Choarta and Qal'ah Chulan. Many of them were killed and the others fled barefoot, leaving behind dozens of dead. Dozens were captured by our heroes.

At 1430, the four columns met inside Nalpariz and beat the drums of victory.

As this report was being prepared, the Jalali mercenaries were fleeing toward Choarta and Dolasur and the heroes of the field command continued to pursue them.

This situation reminds us of the events in the sixties when they were humiliated in the same area, in Mawat, where they began their treasonous history toward Hamdan and began their 30-year-old mercenary march.

In addition to the capture of 116 Jalali mercenaries, dozens of others responded to the call by the Banjwin axis forces and surrendered to the Kurdistan Democartic Party [KDF] and Barzani peshemrga, cursing the Jalalis.

It is regrettable that during this heroic operation, one of our peshmerga was martyred. A thousand salutes to his chaste soul.

May God save your hands, o heroes of al-Sulaymaniyah and (Qarmiyan). Teach them a lesson, restore them to their senses, and make them submit to democracy, the people's will, pluralism, and the spirit of the age. May you live long for the Kurds, for Kurdistan, and for Democracy.

We have already given the names of these 116 prisoners in our Kurdish language programs.

Swiss Sources: Iraq Trying To Revive Arms Deals With Brazil

MM2003110795 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Mar 95 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Diplomatic Sources in Switzerland: Iraqi Attempts To Return to Arms Market"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Geneva, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Informed diplomatic and commercial sources in Switzerland have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Iraq is trying to revive some of its old commercial and armament links with the states it used to deal with before the introduction of the UN sanctions against it, and that its main aim is to reopen some doors with a view to breaking the sanctions and reviving armament dealings.

The sources say that most of these attempts are being made through Barzan al-Tikriti, the Iraqi ambassador in Geneva and half brother of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, who had conducted numerous such trade and diplomatic transactions at various stages in the past.

According to the same sources, one of the main attempts is with Brazil, which participated in the supply and manufacture of missiles for Iraq in the eighties. According to some reports, an Iraqi trade delegation visited Brazil around the end of November last year for that purpose and initiated negotiations which have not officially ended to this day.

They add that the industrialists union in Sao Paolo received the delegation unofficially and talks were held in the general framework of Iraq's $260-million debts to Brazil and lesser Brazilian debts to Iraq, which gave rise to some questions as to the significance of that framework considering that the sums involved are not so great as to warrant that kind of commercial attention between Iraqi and Brazil.

The same sources say that, in their talks, the two sides stressed that whatever agreements are concluded would not become officially effective before the sanctions against Iraq are lifted, but the offers made by Iraq in these talks denote a real interest in breaking the sanctions, not preparing for the post-sanctions era. The Iraqis offered Brazil a deal whereby cheap Iraqi oil would be exchanged for Brazilian food and medical items, but the real nature of the goods to be sent to Iraq is what international diplomatic attention is focusing on.

The sources maintain that the proposed deal is similar to that concluded with Brazil before the sanctions were imposed leading to the present state of indebtedness between the two countries. That was the deal concluded with the then government-owned company InterBraz. That company was liquidated some time ago and the government officially transferred the debts to the PetroBraz company.

Brazil is still procrastinating in these talks for several reasons, the most important being that violating the sanctions imposed on Iraq by the Security Council would mean destroying Brazil's hope of getting permanent membership of the Security Council when it is enlarged. Another reason is the Brazilian elections and the internal responsibility that would fall on the government signing any contracts if these matters were exposed.

The way these attempts are talked about indicates that Brazilian sensitivity regarding the issue denotes that there are some undisclosed military aspects to that deal, bearing in mind that the commission in charge of ensuring Iraqi disarmament still believes that it has been unable to expose all past Iraqi programs which Brazil was frequently a part of.

Baghdad Hotel Reportedly Converted to Germ Warfare Center

NC2103161295 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The opposition National Iraqi Reconciliation Movement has reported that the 'Aflaqite regime has vacated the al-Hamra' Hotel in east Baghdad and designated it as a center for germ warfare research.

This was reported by the BAGHDAD paper, the movement's mouthpiece. It added that this step was an attempt by the Iraqi regime to conceal the centers for testing banned weapons from the UN inspectors charged with removing the regime's weapons of mass destruction.

The paper said that the 'Aflaqite authorities also moved a quantity of [words indistinct] material, which are used to manufacture germ weapons, in special vehicles that do not attract attention from their former sites to special warehouses in the new area of Baghdad.

Western Companies 'Striking Giant' Oil Deals in Baghdad

JN2103123695 Baghdad INA in English 1120 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Paris, March 21, INA—Western oil officials are now in Baghdad for striking giant oil deals to be implemented after the economic sanctions are lifted.

Diplomatic sources here said that the French Total Company is to reach an agreement to develop a 400,000 barrel per day b/d capacity gigantic oil field in southern Iraq.

Deputy chairman of the company said that Total would employ several billions of dollars to develop the said oil field.

The sources added that Alef Company is now negotiating to develop Majnun oil field with 600,000 b/d while its proven reserve is 38 billion barrels.

These sources elaborated that the Western companies, including the French ones are now under intensive pressures by the U.S. Administration to block concluding oil deals with Iraq.

Paper: U.S. Officials' Tours Reflect 'Anxiety'

JN2003113495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0808 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has stressed that U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry's tour of the Arab region seeks to serve the U.S. strategy seeking to turn this entire region into a U.S. protectorate.

In an article published today, the paper says that the United States seeks to tighten its control of this vital and strategic region of the world, employing imaginary and unfounded pretexts and justifications to alarm and terrorize the Arab Gulf states from possible threats from Iraq and Iran.

The paper adds that the intensification of U.S. efforts in this regard, starting with the unsuccessful Albright and Christopher tours of the region, up to the tours of the U.S. vice president and secretary of defense at this time in particular, reflect the extent of the U.S. Administration's anxiety as a result of the progress and the restoration to normal of relations between Iraq and a number of Gulf states.

The paper says that when the U.S. secretary of defense speaks of "possible threats from Iraq and Iran," he will simply be reiterating statements by Anthony Lake, Clinton's adviser for national security, and Martin Indyk on the policy of dual containment, a policy described by some strategists in the United States as a costly and impractical policy.

The paper says that some Arab Gulf states have been asked to provide guarantees for U.S. troops' use of vital ports and bases in the Gulf, hold further joint military exercises, and reinforce their joint preparedness. This request, the paper says, is in fact a request for providing guarantees for the continued U.S. milking of those states, extorting more billions of Gulf oil dollars, and concluding more deals.

Concluding its article, the paper says that the U.S. defense secretary's statements belittle the intelligence of the area peoples. It is as if all Arab Gulf officials are unaware of the true objectives and motives lying behind his tour and U.S. officials' earlier tours.

Reportage on Visit by Egyptian Party Leader Murad

Meets With Vice President Ramadan

NC2003201395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has affirmed that the Arab people, with their national parties, organizations, bodies, and masses, are standing firmly alongside the fraternal Iraqi people in their confrontation with the unjust blockade imposed on it.

During a meeting today with Egyptian Liberal Party leader Mustafa Kamil Murad and his accompanying delegation, Ramadan praised the role of the progressive Egyptian parties and organizations as well as the Egyptian people in their support for and solidarity with the Iraqi people in the face of the unjust blockade.

The vice president asked that every possible effort and all Arab resources to be mobilized to unify the Arab ranks and restore Arab solidarity to what it used to be, thus enhancing the Arab capability in the face of the imperialist challenges. He also stressed the need for common Arab action to alleviate the sufferings of the Iraqi people by adopting a unified Arab stance on the lifting of the unjust siege. He lauded the stances of the Arab states that are calling for the siege to be lifted.

The Egyptian Liberal Party leader reiterated his party's support for and solidarity with the Iraqi people. He noted the need to activate popular Arab efforts to face the imperialist and Zionist challenges and conspiracies. He praised the reconstruction campaigns under way in Iraq following the treacherous 30-state aggression, which tried to destroy Iraq's infrastructure by hitting civilian factories and installations.

Meets With Speaker Salih

NC2003210395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2015 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (MENA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih received Mustafa Kamil Murad, leader of the Egyptian Liberal Party, and his accompanying delegation tonight.

Salih said the continuing unfair blockade of Iraq is a major crime and a flagrant violation of human rights. The blockade has deprived Iraqi citizens of their simplest rights and has caused the deaths of thousands of citizens, most of them children, women, and old people because of the acute shortage of medicine.

Salih noted that Iraq blesses any Arab effort to marshal the ranks and achieve the unity of the Arab nation.

Murad described the blockade as an ugly crime on which silence cannot be maintained. He said that the 30-state aggression against Iraq, despite its ferocity, was not able to weaken the close the relationship between the leadership and the citizens. The brave Iraqis, who have rebuilt what the enemies destroyed, have proved with deeds that they are a genuine and invincible Arab people.

Meets With 'Aziz

JN2103132495 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade Tariq 'Aziz, official in charge of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, today received Mustafa Kamil Murad, leader of the Egyptian Liberal Party and his accompanying delegation. The conferees discussed relations between the two parties and ways of enhancing them in the interest of the two fraternal countries and common Arab hopes.

The two sides reviewed the situation in the Arab arena, stressing the need for the return of Arab relations to normal to face the dangers that threaten the Arab nation in all fields. They also reviewed the role of Arab parties and movements in achieving this objective.

Mustafa Kamil Murad asserted his solidarity with the people of Iraq against the unfair blockade imposed on them. The Liberal Party delegation expressed admiration of the reconstruction drive and the progress made by Iraq in spite of the unfair blockade.

The meeting was attended by the director of the Foreign Relations Bureau in the Iraq Command of the Ba'th Party and the secretary general of the Arab Popular Forces Conference.

Rabin Calls Off Meeting on Palestinian Prisoners

TA2103182695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting of the ministerial committee scheduled for tomorrow to discuss the release of Palestinian prisoners has been called off due to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's displeasure over Yasir 'Arafat's handling of terror.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz points out that an agreement to hold such a discussion was made in the meeting between Peres and 'Arafat two weeks ago. It has now been decided to put it off due to the terrorist attacks and attempted attacks over the last few days.

The prime minister was briefed today about the Israel Police and Border Police operation which thwarted the scheme to blow up a truck in the Beersheba area. Mr. Rabin expressed his appreciation to the police and sent his wishes for a speedy recovery to Staff Sergeant Major Nisim Alon, the policeman who was wounded in the operation.

General Notes Hundreds of 'Terrorists' Arrested

TA2103184095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Ilan Biran, commander of the Central Command, said that when it comes to fighting terror his hands are tied only by the law. Interviewed by our correspondent Gil Litman, Gen. Biran said that hundreds of activists from Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine had been arrested recently. Activists whose actions could not be proved were placed under administrative arrest, said Gen. Biran, who added that many Hamas offices in Judaea and Samaria have been closed.

He noted that four or five hard-core terrorist squads are active in the field, and that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will lay its hands on them. Many terrorist attacks have been foiled, but this is not enough, he asserted.

Gen. Biran refused to comment on the letters exchanged with Tzvi Katzover, head of the Qiryat Arba' Council, saying: I have been an officer and a gentleman for 30 years, and I will continue to be one.

IDF Officer Warns of Hamas Strength in West Bank

TA2203113595 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Mar 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by Army affairs correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] A senior officer in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch said that the defense establishment is highly concerned about the increase in Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] influence throughout the West Bank over the course of recent months. Support for Hamas, the officer said, has grown recently. In his assessment, between 15 to 40 percent of West Bank residents support the organization. "Support for Hamas has its ups and downs. There was a decline that was followed by an upsurge. The level of support currently remains stable. If Hamas takes part in the elections it could definitely constitute a viable opposition to 'Arafat.

"Hamas," the source noted, "could win the support of between 400,000 to 600,000 Palestinians, which is a lot. We are very concerned about the sweeping nature of Hamas' modus operandi which incorporates propaganda and proselytizing. They have a wide infrastructure. They assist the population in lieu of the authorities and dispense aid to needy families."

The Intelligence Branch officer said that Hamas now controls five out of the 12 hospitals in the West Bank. "This is very significant and more worrisome than anything else. They control the universities and the schools. The student committees are made up of Hamas members. They control major centers in the West Bank." If a West Bank resident needs help, the officer says, "instead of seeking to get it from the official authorities, there is a good chance he will find his way to Hamas." The officer said that Hamas has adopted a modus operandi similar to that of the Muslim Brotherhood. Hamas controls 80 percent of the mosques. The organization receives funds from abroad, including countries in Africa.

In the officer's assessment, " 'Arafat can do whatever he likes in Gaza. The problem is that other people in Gaza are also acting as they see fit. 'Arafat is trying to show some results—he is doing more than in the past—but without much enthusiasm. 'Arafat is making arrests and harassing members of the Islamic movements and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. He is taking determined action against the opposition. We do not know whether his announcements about the arrest of terrorists planning to carry out suicide attacks are true. We have no verification of this."

According to the officer, Gaza is facing the threat of "Lebanonization." The officer said that "there are militias in the area, mainly armed Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists. The area will undergo a Lebanonization if 'Arafat does not get tough with them. He understands that, and we also make it clear to him." [passage omitted]

Beilin Views Improving Relations With Egypt

TA2103185495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This afternoon, Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin met Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa in Cairo. After the meeting, he said that the storm in the relations between Israel and Egypt has recently calmed. He also met today with Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs. Our correspondent in Cairo Yo'el Nir reports:

[Begin recording] [Nir] During their visit here yesterday, the members of the delegation of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, or at least some of them, received the impression that the Egyptians are tough, seeking a conflict with Israel, and patronizing. Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin found different Egyptians, although he and the committee members talked to the same Egyptian Foreign Minister Musa. Beilin says:

[Beilin] I am certain that the spirits calmer and today the situation in the relations between us is different. We have seen this change over the past several days: our parliamentary delegation was here, we take part in the Cairo trade fair, and there are other things. Some things that are taking place today have not been like this in the past, which we should welcome. At the same time, we cannot ignore the difficulties.

[Nir] Also, Beilin says, regarding the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Egyptians have started to better understand the Israeli position. Egypt, he added, will help Israel promote its relations with other countries in the Arab world, not only in the Persian Gulf. [passage omitted] [end recording]

U.S. Criticized on Iran Nuclear Issue

TA2103152995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Mar 95 p B1

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "According to the Worst-Case Scenario"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As is to be expected, voices in Washington have come up with the vexing claim that Israel is causing unnecessary panic by pointing the finger at Iran's fervent efforts to obtain nuclear weapons. Whereas Israeli intelligence has assessed it will take only several years, the U.S. State Department—and especially the Texas oil companies—have complacently said the situation is not as bad as Israel claims.

There is little cause for surprise at this. There are differences of opinion in the State Department between the approach advocating a total boycott of Tehran and the supporters of the German approach, which claims that only contact with Iran can soften its regime. The Germans were joined by the U.S. oil companies which purchase $5 billion-worth of crude oil annually from Iran and make a fortune by refining it far away from the United States.

THE NEW YORK TIMES wrote last week that the U.S. oil companies are conducting an independent foreign policy while ignoring national interests. It is true that President Clinton banned these deals, but there are legal loopholes that benefit the Iranians. Since the heyday of imperialism between the two world wars there have been no sharper descriptions of the behavior of Western oil companies. The Germans, in particular, do not give a damn. Not only have they cynically used the Ron Arad affair to justify their flourishing relations with Iran, they have also divulged that the Tehran police uses American radio equipment.

Minister Efrayim Sne, who deals with the issue, criticizes the claims of the U.S. oil companies and the hesitancy of the State Department. Two days ago he told me the West should act according to a worst-case scenario rather than counting on the possibility that its fears will be proved wrong. Dr. Sne said Iran is on the verge of a qualitative breakthrough in terms of development, procurement, and enlisting foreign scientists.

Israel does not have much time and must prepare for a dangerous development. The Roman aphorism that "he who wants peace must prepare for war" is doubly valid on the nuclear issue. It is also very hard to rely on the assuaging remarks of some of the Western parties which have vested interests in Iran.

In the early 1980's these parties claimed Saddam Husayn's Iraq was not close to obtaining nuclear weapons and criticized Menahem Begin's decision to destroy the Iraqi nuclear reactor. Only about 10 years later did the United States change its mind on this matter, and it is possible it would not have done so were it not for Saddam's invasion of Kuwait.

Iran is not as close to Israel as Iraq. Israel cannot deal with this threat itself. Even the more creative Israeli preventive security brains admit as much. Israel, however, cannot remain indifferent and it is safe to assume it has tried to influence powerful elements in the international arena. Israel probably informed President Clinton of the activities of Conoco, causing the White House to intervene and cancel the deal. Israel, on the other hand, did not succeed in convincing Russia to refrain from selling nuclear reactors to Iran.

Jerusalem cannot lead the struggle against Iran's nuclear program. It was not permitted to join the coalition against Iraq in 1991, and it will not be permitted to publicly join a coalition against Iran. It can, however, serve as a facilitator behind the scenes in the following areas:

—Uncovering illegal deals between Western consortiums and Iran. The Conoco affair is not an isolated case. It is vital to arouse public opinion in the West and in Russia on this issue before it is too late. Israel can act in this respect without attracting attention.

—Israel should isolate Germany and prevent it from conducting an independent foreign policy vis-a-vis Iran. It is also still possible to convince the Russians to cancel their deal with Iran.

—Israel should be vitally interested in participating in any intelligence efforts—whether of an information gathering nature or covert operations—that will harm

Iran's nuclear program. Any link with significant elements in Tehran could serve its interests. Irangate was a faulty implementation of a sound idea.

Israel cannot do the work by itself. It can serve, however, as the focal point for encouraging anti-Iran operations. In order for this to succeed it must act urgently, based on the pessimistic timetable of its experts.

Netanyahu Critical of Sarid; Likud Urges Dismissal

TA2103170595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Likud faction called on the prime minister to dismiss Environment Minister Yosi Sarid from the government and to end his participation in the peace negotiations with the Palestinians. Likud Leader Binyamin Netanyahu told No'omi Segal that Sarid's statements that the Jewish settlers should leave Hebron plays right into the interests of the terrorists who carried out Sunday night's attack.

[Begin recording] [Netanyahu] Mr. Sarid's call to depart from Hebron under the threat of Arab terror is exactly the kind of response that they wanted after the most recent murder incident. This is what they want. They want Israel to say: We do not stand and fight; we get up and run. And not only do we run, we run from the most ancient Jewish city, the most ancient Jewish community in the history of the Jewish people. Well, if we cannot live in Hebron, if we have no rights in the city of Abraham and the Patriarchs, where can we live and where will we live? I think this reflects the true position of the government. I do not think Mr. Sarid is speaking personally. He is effectively reflecting—as a senior member of the cabinet and as its representative for the talks with the PLO—the policy that guides this government: Instead of fighting terrorism, it runs away from it.

[Segal] Earlier this week, Minister Sarid made other comments that are also controversial regarding the formation of a de facto Palestinian state and, at that time in fact, the prime minister did distance himself from those comments. He said they were not necessarily the view of the government.

[Netanyahu] Well, he can say that again and again, but it is a fact that Mr. Sarid represents Yitzhaq Rabin in the negotiations. He could always change the negotiators. He has not done that. And I think that by enabling Mr. Sarid who talks about a Palestinian state and Mr. Peres who lively talks about ceding the Golan in its entirety to Syria, Mr. Rabin effectively is saying: What these people are saying, is what I am thinking. What has to be done now is a change of thinking, a change of policy, and a change of doing. That is, instead of knuckling under to these pressures and to the forces of terror, both Palestinian terrorism with the aegis of 'Arafat and Hizballah terrorism with the aegis of al-Asad, it is required now to fully change direction and to say: You cannot have it both ways. You cannot have so-called peace talks and terror. Choose one or the other, but not both. [end recording]

February 1995 NEQUDA Review

TA2003150495

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a review of the February issue of NEQUDA, the monthly Hebrew-language magazine published by the Society for the Advancement of Settlement and Absorption in Judaea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip, and the Jordan Valley, which serves as the political organ of the Jewish settlers in the territories. These reports include summaries of all articles, reports, interviews, commentaries, and other items with a bearing on political affairs published in NEQUDA.

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1. In Lieu of an Editorial
2. Lily-White
3. Watch Out, Bypass Roads
4. A Practical Point

IN LIEU OF AN EDITORIAL

The column, appearing on pages 10 and 11, consists of four essays of varying length. The first is an 800-word essay entitled "The Conditions for an Alternative," which notes that recent polls indicate that most of the public currently prefer Netanyahu to Rabin and reject the Oslo agreement. Stressing the grave danger of an imminent Palestinian state, it notes that "it is difficult but not impossible to turn back the wheel." This, however, requires a courageous and credible leadership able to correct the blunders made by recent governments. The essay goes on to note the historic mistakes made by "the national camp": not implementing Israeli law in the territories; the Camp David agreements and withdrawal from the Sinai; and Begin's recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. It goes on to comment on the ensuing intifadah that broke out during the period of the national unity government, noting that "we must not ignore the fact that the senior partner in that government was the Likud with Yitzhaq Shamir as prime minister." Reiterating that it would be difficult to turn back the wheel, the essay points out that in order for this to happen, "the Likud—along with the other parties constituting the national camp—must immediately work out a national emergency plan." The main points of this plan will be "resuming full control over all terror centers, canceling the Oslo and Cairo agreements, expelling the Palestinian entity's men and their supporters, and changing the legal status of these areas."

A 200-word essay entitled "This Time (For a Change) He is Right" lauds President Weizman for advocating a halt in the implementation of the Oslo and Cairo agreements for reassessment purposes. It cautions that "the minimum this government can do to stop the dangerous spiral toward disaster is to unequivocally acquiesce to the president's advise to halt the implementation of the Oslo and Cairo agreements and to, as Weizman put it, think things over."

A 400-word essay entitled "This Was No Second Sebastia," criticizes the compromise that the Efrata settlers reached with the government regarding construction at Giv'at Hatamar. It notes that the Israeli public "has felt humiliated by the appalling government surrender to Peace Now and Ahmad al-Tibi." It further criticizes Efrata Mayor Yinon Ahiman for not showing firmness and determination. "It is likely that with a firm leadership Giv'at Hatamar would have turned into the bulwark against the national surrender, just as Sebastia was in the past."

A 300-word essay entitled "Unnecessary Appeal" sharply criticizes the Military Judge Advocate Office for appealing against the partial acquittal of Lieutenant Oren Edri. It stresses that the public, which has never believed the charges against Edri to begin with, now gravely views this appeal. The Shin Bet has made many mistakes in this affair; therefore, "it had better call off this appeal."

LILY-WHITE

This 3,000-word article by Me'ira Dolev deals with the Efrata incident and contains interviews with various settlement activists who sharply criticize the decision to give up Giv'at Hatamar and to settle for construction on Giv'at Hazayit, which is adjacent to the Efrata settlement. Whereas Efrata Mayor Yinon Ahiman claims that he did not surrender but was rather presented with a government fait accompli, Rabbi Shim'on Golan, who is contesting the local mayoralty with Ahiman, charges that "this affair is a bad omen for Yinon Ahiman's leadership." The article reviews the activities of Ahiman over the last few weeks, noting that it was a difficult period for him in which he waged a tough struggle against the plan to stop construction at the settlement. It further quotes Knesset Member Hanan Porat, who was involved in the campaign, as justifying the compromise in the following words: "Once we were presented with a reasonable compromise proposal we could not refuse it, because this would have caused a serious rift among our public, in which case it would have been impossible to launch such a difficult public campaign." It goes on to comment on the moderate, multifarious, and liberal character of Efrata—an affluent Jerusalem suburb—in which Kakh supporters and Meretz voters live side by side. Some of the settlers, however, have tired of this lukewarm image and have organized an action committee aimed at "rallying the residents for the struggle," as Rabbi Golan puts it. The article winds up by faulting Ahiman's hesitancy and timidness, remarking that "with a little more vision and daring, Efrata could have expanded much more."

WATCH OUT, BYPASS ROADS

This 2,000-word article by Me'ir Gross analyzes the government plan to build bypass roads in the West Bank, stating that this plan indicates that the government has neither the desire nor the will to directly deal with the problem. The article says that the government "needs these roads in order to implement its separation plan" and that the government, which wants to revive the crumbling Oslo process, needs the settlers' support for two reasons: "for preserving the calm on the one hand, and as an address for its frustrations and accusations on the other." The article further notes that the bypass roads that were built in the early 1980's were meant to strengthen the settlements, "whereas today these roads will mainly facilitate the development of Arab villages, which—contrary to Jewish settlements—can be built anywhere. The article warns that even if tactically speaking this or that road is helpful, strategic cooperation with the government must be avoided, because "it is clear that it is willing to knowingly leave the security of our women and children in the hands of proven terrorists and consequently does not deserve our cooperation. In short, our cooperation will only serve those who want to harm us." The article proposes to deal with every new road on merit according to various security criteria which it lists and emphasizes that "the bypass roads must be constructed along routes determined by the settlers themselves." The article says: "Finally, we should proceed cautiously in order not to be counted among those contributing to the establishment of a foreign state in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip."

PRACTICAL POINT

This 6,000-word column on pages 34, 35, 36, and 37 by 'Ami'el Unger consists of six essays. The first essay, entitled "Taking Off the Gloves," reviews recent political developments that reflect the government's incompetence, noting that "the feeling in the government that everything is disintegrating and that in the next election the public will send Labor to hell could exacerbate dangerous processes." The essay denigrates the government for breaking all the rules of the game in its campaign against the settlers and urges the opposition to negotiate with Labor Knesset members who may be influenced to change their political affiliations. On the other hand, "security elements who praise the Palestinian police when they know that the true situation is exactly the opposite will not find any place in the security establishment after the political turnaround."

The second essay, "In Praise of the Separation," sharply criticizes Rabin's separation plan, remarking that the plan, which has abysmally failed in the Gaza Strip, will do no better when implemented in Judaea and Samaria. The essay criticizes Israeli correspondents such as DAVAR military correspondent On Levi who express understanding for the Palestinian police, as well as Major General Biran, commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Central Command, "who announced changes in the IDF's rules of engagement to the effect that henceforth it is forbidden to open fire even at a Palestinian policeman aiming his weapon at a soldier."

The third essay, entitled "The Theory Has Been Proven, the Peace Is Dead," comments on deteriorating Israeli-Egyptian relations. It notes that the 300,000 Egyptians working in Libya inject a lot of money into the Egyptian economy and that "consequently Egypt cannot cooperate with the U.S. sanctions against Libya." Egypt, the essay further claims, believes that for a successful struggle Islamic fundamentalism requires a hostile attitude toward Israel. It further notes that Israel, "which is cultivating a warm peace with Jordan, is risking a cold peace with Egypt, Jordan's traditional enemy."

The fourth essay, "From Resolved to Dissolved," analyzes Labor's leadership problems, mentioning that rumors are rife in Labor that Rabin has already decided not to run in the next election. It notes, however, "that those who expect a Rabin retirement announcement or an internal coup against him will have to wait a long time—unless the security situation continues to deteriorate and there are additional Bet Lid-style terror attacks." The essay further remarks that Peres, "Rabin's Siamese twin," is waiting for a sudden deterioration in Rabin's status as close as possible to the election, in which case "he will accept party discipline and agree to head the party in the 1996 election campaign in the role of party savior." It then goes on to discuss the position and aspirations of Police Minister Moshe Shahal and Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, both of whom "hurried to announce their willingness to replace Rabin." The latter, however, is known to prefer the younger generation to the middle generation, which could work against these two ministers.

The fifth essay, "Chechnya Next Door," criticizes the government's mild reaction to events in Chechnya, saying Israel should have sent a military contingent to the area instead of settling for the Foreign Ministry's blabbering. It remarks that "with the government policy being what it is, we can soon expect a Chechnya next door." The essay adds that Israel will soon find itself having to act against the Grozny-type cities located five minutes from Kefar Sava, "but that unlike the Russians—who banned journalists from the area—we will permit freedom of the press." It goes on to say that, while no country has threatened to launch an all-out war against Russia in the wake of the Chechnya operation, "if Israel acts against its own Grozny it will risk an extensive war and will be faced with masses of volunteers who will rush to the aid of their Arab and Muslim brethren."

The sixth essay, entitled "Our Own Son of a Bitch," refers to Moledet Knesset Member Ba-Gad's indiscretions, the last one being his groundless declaration on the Knesset podium about the kidnapping of an IDF soldier. Noting that Ba-Gad is not exactly his cup of tea, the author quotes President Franklin Roosevelt's remarks concerning a pro-American dictator: "Maybe he is a son of a bitch, but at least he is our son of a bitch." The essay stresses that Ba- Gad "is one of us, and in a war waged by the left wing against our very existence, we must defend him."

U.S. Vice President Al Gore Arrives in Amman

Ties, Regional Peace on Agenda

JN2103152795 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Vice President Al Gore arrived in Amman today, the second leg of his Middle East tour which includes Israel, the self-rule area, the Sultanate of Oman, and Saudi Arabia.

The visit comes to promote ties of friendship and cooperation between the two friendly countries, and to stress the continuation of the U.S. efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

King, Gore Hold Talks at Palace

JN2203073195 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0530 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] His majesty the king has met U.S. Vice President Albert Gore at Raghadan Palace. Then the meeting was joined by senior officials from both sides.

During their meeting, his majesty the king welcomed Mr. Al Gore and expressed hope that he and the accompanying delegation see Jordan's achievements in various fields in a period full of challenges and changes.

His majesty the king reiterated Jordan's determination to strengthen democracy and political pluralism as well as human rights. The king affirmed Jordan's commitment to achieve a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East region. His majesty the king pointed to what has been achieved since the Washington Declaration and the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace accord. He added that Jordan will also support peace efforts on the other tracks.

On his part, the American vice president expressed his country's appreciation to the wisdom of his majesty the king's leadership and Jordan's achievements along the peace tracks. Mr. Al Gore confirmed the United States' commitment to support Jordan in all fields, especially in the economic and defense fields.

He signaled out Jordan's role in maintaining security and stability in the region. During the meeting, they also discussed many regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Bin-Shakir, Gore Address Officials

JN2103193995 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1822 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Addresses by Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir and U.S. Vice President Al Gore at a meeting with political and economic figures and ranking state officials at the Royal Cultural Center in Amman on 21 March—recorded, in English]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Bin-Shakir] On behalf of his majesty the king, the people, and the government of Jordan, may I extend to you a warm welcome, Mr. Vice President, on your first visit to our country.

You are visiting a part of the world that has been a source of tension and conflict for many years. Now, at long last, the Middle East is entering a new phase in its agonizing quest for peace and stability. It is our firm conviction that peace and security on the one hand, and building democratic institutions on the other, are the main prerequisites to sustainable social and economic development. Hence, Jordan has embarked on achieving both. We believe that durable peace requires that it should be both just and comprehensive. Thus, we greatly appreciate President Clinton's determination to remain actively engaged in consolidating peace in all its other tracks—the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks.

Furthermore, the durability of peace strongly indicates full national and regional security in an equitable manner, starting with being able to modernize our Armed Forces and extending toward living in a region free from weapons of mass destruction. A strong Jordan, Mr. Vice President, can preserve its security and face the challenges of the future.

In a world of global interdependence and free market economies, the industrialized countries, led by your great country, are invited now, more than at any other time, to participate and help in shaping the new era of peace by committing themselves to take immediate and meaningful action to support our economic efforts. Such action can make a difference between suffering of long years of conflict and the promise of a stable, secure, and prosperous era of peace.

In this context, please allow me to extend to the American people our gratitude for the efforts taken on their behalf by the administration and the Congress to cancel Jordan's debt. Special thanks should go to President Clinton, who worked so hard to honor his commitment to our country.

Lastly, may I share with you, Mr. Vice President, the feelings of friendship and warmth that we hold for your country. Your abiding commitment to the security and welfare of Jordan are known and appreciated by all Jordanians.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to present to you the Vice President of the United States. [applause]

[Gore] Thank you very much. Mr. Prime Minister, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: Ahlan wa sahlan. [preceding three words in Arabic, meaning welcome] Last October 26th, on the day that peace became official between Jordan and Israel, President Clinton stood before the Parliament of Jordan and saluted its members with the following words: On this day, in the desert of the Great Rift Valley, the people of Jordan stepped out of the shadows of strife. You made a bold choice. You rejected the dark forces of terror and extremism. You embraced the bright promise of tolerance and moderation. You spurned those who would drag you back into the hostile past. You chose, instead, a future of opportunity and tranquility for your children.

President Clinton did not mean that signatures on a document automatically produce changes of such magnitude. The documents, however, represent changes in the minds of governments and, ultimately, in the minds of millions of people. What has changed, what made possible the act of signing the document, was a decision that the weapons of war must be put aside and that the tools of peace must be picked up.

Of course, declaring this to be so is one thing, and making it so is another. There are great tasks ahead for the people of Jordan and the peoples of this region. In the first place, the structure of peace is still incomplete and will remain so until the Gulf between Syria and Israel is finally bridged. Secretary of State Christopher succeeded last week in obtaining the agreement of both sides to resume direct, substantive negotiations. This is an important step forward and it is a strong message to all the peoples of the region that the goal of a comprehensive and lasting settlement is still within our grasp.

My government will continue to work hard with the parties in order to help ensure that this noble goal is realized. Only in this way can an era of war and a psychology of conflict be put firmly in the past. The voices of rejection are voices of the past. The councils of despair have no place in the future of this region.

Let me be clear. Groups and states that sponsor or support terrorism are not builders. Inevitably, in their efforts to harm others, they harm themselves more. Peace-loving nations and their citizens must join in eliminating these destructive forces wherever they appear. Our own honor and dignity require us to stand firm and defeat the terrorist threat. Our children and grandchildren will benefit from our steadfastness.

But as we work to contain the enemies of peace and support those who share our hope for the future, what will be the shape of the new Middle East? The people of Jordan and of all the other countries in this region will, of course, make the critical choices. But friends can also offer their vision. We believe that it is possible to accelerate a regional process of economic development, integration, and cooperation which, coupled with the breaking down of political barriers, will mean greater prosperity for the people of Jordan and of the region as a whole. For too long, the people of Jordan have been unable to attain full realization of a prosperity which could be theirs because of the conflict with Israel and because of the barriers to trade and commerce throughout the Middle East. Jordan's decision for peace was driven by an understanding that political ideologies based on hatred and exclusion must be transcended. In turn, that vision is a natural outgrowth of Jordan's own internal development. Jordan under King Husayn is building a society devoted to pluralism and openness. Jordan's commitment to these values is a reflection of this country's remarkable generosity of spirit and wise vision. I am looking forward to my discussions with his majesty and we are very happy that his majesty and the prime minister will be in Washington beginning Sunday for very important consultations there.

Because of King Husayn's visionary and courageous leadership, the physical barriers between Jordan and Israel have been replaced with bridges across which the peoples of each nation can now become partners in commerce, as well as in technology and science. The potential for cooperation between Jordan, Israel, the Palestinians, Egypt, and other countries is immense. This, the United states believes, is the way forward. As Crown Prince Hasan once eloquently said, our collective challenge now is to move from peace-making to peace-building. Leaders of courage and imagination are responding to that challenge. The United States is committed to doing everything possible to advance not just the political peace process, but also the process of encouraging free market growth and the expansion of commercial and investment opportunities throughout the region. It is the central message of my visit here because we have made a compact to walk with you on the road to the future, to help build with you a future for the region based on cooperation and economic development. We intend to honor that commitment.

King, Gore Hold News Conference

JN2103205895 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 21 March 95

[News conference by King Husayn and U.S. Vice President Al Gore with unidentified correspondents at the Royal Hashemite Court in Amman on 21 March, from the "New at Ten" program—recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Husayn] Good evening [preceding two words in Arabic]. Ladies and gentlemen: It is a very, very great pleasure for us here in Jordan, both myself and Nur, to welcome a very dear personal friend, the Vice President of the United States, and Mrs. Gore to Amman and to Jordan on this too brief a visit that, nonetheless, is one that we had looked forward to over a long period of time.

I extend a very hearty welcome to the Vice President on behalf of the government and the people of Jordan. And I express my pride in our friendship and in the very warm friendship that exists between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan—a friendship that has been born over, and grew over many, many years—and the sense of partnership that we have in contributing towards a better future for this region and its people in the times ahead as in the past, and to stress once again our resolve and determination to seek and see in this area a comprehensive peace so that all the peoples of this area can enjoy the opportunity to divert their energies and resources to achieve their dreams and their hopes in peace and with dignity.

I've had the privilege and the opportunity to speak with the Vice President about every problem of interest to us both and to our countries; about the peace process, about the state of peace between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel that has been achieved so far, about the promise of tomorrow, about the other tracks—the Palestinian-Israeli track, and the Syrian-Lebanese-Israeli track—and our hopes that we will see progress there as well, having started from the same point towards the same objective of establishing comprehensive peace.

I think we will be arriving in the United States simultaneously, sir, and I will look forward, sir, to our meetings there. And, once again, I am very, very proud to welcome you in all sincerity. And, sir, if you have any comments to our friends, and then maybe we'll not have to answer to many questions [laughter] but we appreciate being with them. We are very happy indeed to have this chance and opportunity. Thank you, sir.

[Gore] Your Majesty: Thank you very much. My wife Tipper and I are honored to have this opportunity to visit the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and may I say on a personal note that it is a special honor for me to be able to refer to our relationship as a close personal friendship. And may I also say that the American people, as I'm sure you know, join peoples around the world in their admiration for your leadership, for your vision, and for your courage in taking the initiative to create a much brighter future than would be the case without your creative leadership.

Ladies and gentlemen: King Husayn and I have just concluded a lengthy bilateral meeting in which we discussed a number of issues important to both our countries. President Clinton has said in words similar to the ones that I used a moment ago that his majesty is a man of true leadership and vision. We are looking forward to his visit to the United States, beginning on Sunday, for very important consultations at a moment in time when these consultations will be extremely valuable to us. His majesty's willingness to conclude the historic peace agreement signed in the Jordan Rift Valley has made an extremely important contribution toward a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, and toward the creation of hope elsewhere in the world, in other regions where conflict has endured and threatened to overtake hope. King Husayn has taken a leading role in pursuing initiatives designed to improve and expand regional cooperation. We agreed that such cooperation must and will expand as the states of the region turn from peacemaking to peace-building. The Middle East economic summit this fall in Amman will be a major step forward in developing the economic cooperation upon which the future of the region so much depends. My visit here comes at a time when a wider ray of initiatives are underway in the region. In April, a U.S.-sponsored symposium on the development of the Jordan Rift Valley will be held here in Jordan, and in the fall, Jordan will showcase its role as a leader in promoting regional cooperation by hosting the Middle East-North Africa economic summit in Amman. I reiterated to his majesty during our discussions President Clinton's commitment to remain a full partner in the peace process to build on the treaty of peace and friendship between Jordan and Israel and to continue to work toward a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. I assured his majesty of the President's determination to support Jordan as it proceeds with the implementation of this treaty. And finally, the President and I commend King Husayn, as do people throughout the world, for the courage with which he has led the Jordanian people for a long period of time. We look forward to continuing our close partnership and friendship with Jordan and with King Husayn. Thank you.

[Correspondent] Mr. Vice President, you said today without equivocation that the United States would fulfill its commitment to erase Jordan's debts, how can you make that statement with no reservation, given the budget-cutting mood in Congress, the unpopularity of foreign aid, and the House vote to limit that to $50 million?

[Gore] Because of close and intensive consultations with members of Congress and both political parties, consultations which accelerated following the action of the House Appropriation sub-committee, and which convinced me and President Clinton that there is in spite of the House committee action, a strong bipartisan understanding that this commitment, which was made as part of the peace process negotiations, which was made at a time when there was fall and broad consultation with the Congress during the negotiations, is a commitment that our country must keep.

The discussions convinced me that Republicans as well as Democrats in our Congress have shared this strong belief. As I told his majesty, everything short of an absolute commitment which can only be made by someone who can control the future, which no human being can, I can give, and I believe very deeply that this will in fact take place.

[Correspondent] Mr. Vice President, in light of what you have just said, how do you think your contribution in the regional development bank will be in the future?

[Gore] What do I think its contribution will be?

[Correspondent] Your contribution in the regional development bank that you talked about this afternoon and the Amman summit?

[Gore] Well, it has to be established first, and we have focused our efforts on securing international agreement to support the establishment of this regional bank. We have made significant progress in that regard. Some other nations that, well, not opposed to it, nevertheless expressed reservations based merely on the fact that they had unanswered questions about what this bank would do and why it was necessary. These nations, in many cases are now expressing their unreserved support. So, I think the idea has developed a significant amount of momentum, especially as we move toward the summit in Amman this fall. And at the appropriate time, then we and other nations will address detailed questions about how to capitalize the bank and go on.

[Correspondent] Mr. Vice President, could you tell us if you discussed military aid to Jordan, and another question: What is your position concerning the Turkish intervention in Kurdistan?

[Gore] We did discuss Jordan's defense needs. President Clinton had discussions with his majesty about the United States commitment to help Jordan meet its defense needs. Secretary Perry will be hosting his majesty next week in Washington, as well others. But, I know one meeting in particular, a luncheon meeting followed by a lengthy discussion will be focused on this topic. Actually, I think that Secretary Perry might well have been here in my place had I not been here today because he is elsewhere in the region and has talked, has communicated with his majesty about the upcoming consultations in Washington. And Secretary Christopher addressed the subject last week, as well.

Oh, I am sorry, on the Turkish question, we neither condone nor condemn the action taken by Turkey.

[Correspondent] Much has been written about the level of U.S. aid that is being requested and the somewhat different level that seems to be offered or to be possible in Washington, and I wonder if you are disappointed in what seems to be politically possible on the way of aid in Washington now, as compared to what you expected a year ago when you set out on the road to make peace with Israel?

[Husayn] Sir, this is a valid question, I suppose. But, when we set out to secure peace between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel, that was our objective in itself. It was not bargaining over such an important issue. That was our way. It was a commitment to secure a better future for the peoples of this region and our people, and to secure peace between the children of Abraham and their followers for all times to come, hopefully, within the context of a comprehensive peace.

On the other hand, our talks with our friends in Washington, who are as always very, very frank and very open, and they realize as we do that there is a need to do everything possible, as does in fact the government of Israel and the prime minister, to ensure that there is a change in the quality of life of people, with the breaking of the new dawn of peace.

Nothing can happen overnight. It will take time, but already we have taken many, many steps in that direction. One last comment, the United States has a leadership role in this world, and I am fully satisfied with what I've heard from the Vice President and the President, and the secretary of state, and from many friends in Washington regarding the particular issues which you, Sir, have addressed over the debt forgiveness, and that this will be addressed adequately in the time ahead. This will obviously help us very much, first of all, because it was a commitment, and certainly because of the leadership role of the United States in terms of addressing similar problems with many other friends throughout the world to enable us to begin pick up as rapidly as possible, and bring about the change in the quality of life to people in the era of peace. Thank you.

[Gore] If I may comment further, Your Majesty. If Jordan is capable of taking the bold, courageous, and dramatic step that it took to further the cause of peace in the Middle East, I can assure you that we are capable of keeping our word.

[Husayn] Thank you very much indeed, sir.

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct] can I ask you perhaps to restate, to state the obvious perhaps, but to explain to our viewers or to our readers why is American support important at this stage in peace between Israel and Jordan?

[Husayn] Well for one thing, I spoke of the leadership role of the United States, of the partnership with both Jordan and Israel, of the role the United States is playing in terms of peace in this region, and of the fact that we worked together and we will continue to work together to see a better, brighter future for this entire region. So in the case of Jordan, hopefully, what we have achieved will be a model and an example to others. And we in Jordan are proud of ourselves as a people, proud of our achievements, determined to do whatever we can for a better tomorrow. All our work is not for today, but for the times ahead. We are proud of our democracy, our pluralism, our respect for human rights. We are proud of the institutions in this country that mean that people have a say in shaping their future. And we are optimistic regarding the peace, which came about as a result of our determination when the right time came for us to move seriously and achieve what we have achieved. But we would like people to see the change. We know already a psychological one has occurred in terms of the difference between old days that have passed when we waked up with each day not knowing what it would bring. Now there is a foundation of hope and confidence and faith, and our people are ready to move ahead and build, and hopefully this will be achieved and we would like certainly the United States—our partner and friend—to be involved with us in this process.

[Correspondent] Mr. Vice President, you will be visiting Israel this week. Will you attempt to convince Premier Rabin to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, or does the U.S. support the U.S. stand towards the treaty?

[Gore] Well, we believe that the treaty should have universal application, but we will support the dialogue that has now begun between Egypt and Israel with respect to that question.

[Husayn] OK, last question.

[Correspondent] Do you believe, sir, that it is time now for the Untied States to help Jordan to have its real role concerning the security in the region, and if so how can the United States help Jordan to do so, thank you?

[Gore] Well, we have had a long-time friendship with Jordan that has also existed in the realm of cooperation concerning defense needs, and we are continuing that dialogue and that relationship. Security in the region depends on Jordan's ability to meet its defense needs. It depends on continued momentum in the peace process—momentum to which Jordan has added significantly. And it depends on progress in the other tracks of the peace process as well, and we are working on all those fronts.

[Husayn] Thank you very, very much indeed.

[Gore] Thank you.

Gore Ends Visit, Departs

JN2203094695 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Vice President Al Gore left Amman for Israel today following a brief visit to Jordan.

During his visit, Gore held talks with His Majesty King Husayn and Prime Minister His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir on the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations.

Gore was seen off by Prime Minister His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, the Senate president, the House of Representatives speaker, a number of ministers, and the U.S. ambassador in Amman.

King To Bring Up Jerusalem Embassy Issue in Washington

JN2203134695 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22 Mar 95 pp 1, 7

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan plans to ask the Clinton administration not to consider moving the American embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem in line with a call made by members of the U.S. Senate, but the Kingdom has not made any official representation yet to Washington in this regard, officials said Wednesday.

Official sources said they expected the issue to be brought up during talks U.S. Vice-President Al Gore was having in Amman Tuesday night, and again during the visit of His Majesty King Husayn to Washington, where he is expected to meet with President Bill Clinton at the White House on March 27.

The officials were speaking one day after 93 members of the U.S. Senate, led by Patrick Moynihan, a Democrat from New York, sent a letter to Secretary of State Warren Christopher saying that American policy should be "clear and unequivocal" that Jerusalem is Israel's capital.

It was the latest in efforts by American lawmakers to have Washington recognise Israel's claim that the Holy City, the eastern part of which it seized in the 1967 war, is its "eternal and indivisible capital."

Only handful of countries recognise the Israeli claim. The official American stand is that the status of Jerusalem is an issue that should be settled through Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Senior Clinton administration officials, including Martin Indyk, Washington's ambassador to Israel, have advised against moving the embassy to Jerusalem saying it would have a serious negative impact on the Arab-Israeli peace process.

The Jordanian Government and Parliament, which support the Palestinians' claim to East Jerusalem, have consistently opposed any move of foreign diplomatic missions in Israel to Jerusalem. The Palestinians' stand is also supported by the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Conference as well as many members of the Organisation of African Unity and the Non-aligned Movement.

'Abdallah al-Nusur, head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House of Parliament, said this week that the American congressmen's move, if implemented, would not only violate the related United Nations Security Council resolutions but would also have serious repercussions on the peace process.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, in their September 1993 declaration of principles, have agreed to put off negotiations on the status of Jerusalem until 1996.

The senators' letter to Mr. Christopher said: "We believe that the United States Embassy belongs in Jerusalem. It would be most appropriate for planning to begin now to ensure such a move" by May 1999.

Senators Moynihan and D'Amato noted that the House of Representatives as well as the Senate have in the past approved non- binding resolutions calling on the United States to acknowledge Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Reuter reported.

"United States policy should be equally clear and unequivocal," said the letter.

King, Queen Leave for Paris, U.S., Canada

JN2203153795 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur left the homeland today for Paris on the first leg of a tour which will also take them to the United States and Canada.

Their majesties were seen off at the airport by His Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn, their highnesses the princes and princesses, and members of the royal family.

His Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn took the constitutional oath, in the presence of the ministers, as regent.

His Highness Prince 'Ali Bin-al-Husayn, His Highness Prince Hashim Bin-al-Husayn; al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, prime minister; Major General Humayd al-Fayiz, military adviser to his majesty the king; and the French ambassador to Jordan, left with their majesties.

A royal decree was issued appointing 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah, deputy prime minister and education minister, as acting prime minister during the prime minister's absence outside the kingdom.

Al-Kabariti on Iraqi Embargo, Embassy Transfer Issue

JN2103135995 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 21 Mar 95 pp 1, 17

[Report by Nabil Ghayshan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A high-level source has told AL-ASWAQ that the Jordanian Government will ask the U.S. Administration not to consider transferring its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem or even set up any diplomatic offices on the (Lenby?) camp site land that it rented when President Ronald Reagan was in office.

The source added: We will demand that the U.S. Administration not heed some of the voices in Congress that are calling for transferring the embassy. This is in harmony with the resolutions of international legitimacy regarding the holy city and is meant to keep the momentum of the peace process going.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti told AL- ASWAQ that the Arab League is standing at a crossroads that will decide its future. The decision will depend on the extent of its success in launching a dialogue to restore confidence between the Arabs and achieving the minimum level of solidarity between them.

The foreign minister made the statement prior to his departure for Cairo this morning to take part in the meetings of the Arab League Council on the golden anniversary of the Arab League. [passage omitted]

In another statement to REUTERS, Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has reiterated the call for dealing seriously with Iraq's demands that the blockade be eased or lifted. The foreign minister focused on the human suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of the blockade. He said that Iraq should be rewarded because it has implemented many Security Council resolutions and demands.

Al-Kabariti said: "I think what is taking place now against the Iraqi people is a human rights violation. International legitimacy should be in accord with the logic of international justice to save the people of Iraq and Iraq's territorial integrity so that the soil of Iraq will not turn into a scorched earth where only thorns can grow. This will pose a greater threat to the security and stability of the region.

Al-Kabariti added that all the Iraqi officials with whom he met recently have stressed to him Iraq's determination to cooperate with Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission supervising the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical weapons .

Al-Kabariti said: "All the officials I have met have asserted that Iraq will implement the remaining demands of Ambassador Ekeus and that Iraq is responding to UN resolutions." He added: "I think Iraq has made positive achievements, and it is now the Security Council's turn to implement its own resolutions."

In a separate development, a responsible source at the Foreign Ministry told AL-ASWAQ yesterday that the Jordanian Government has been informed that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has ordered that temporary headquarters be given to the Jordanian Embassy in Gaza.

The source added: Starting next week, we will equip and furnish the headquarters. Ziyad al-Majali, chief of the Israel desk at the Foreign Ministry, is expected to leave for Gaza to serve as Jordan's representative there.

Buwayz on Peace Process, Copenhagen Summit

MM2103160595 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Mar 95 pp 1-2

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by unidentified correspondent in Copenhagen; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] You have met with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali in Copenhagen. What were the most important issues you discussed with him?

[Buwayz] Firstly I discussed with Dr. Butrus-Ghali the question of the Lebanese detainees in the Israeli prisons, who number about 200. I told him that the number released by Israel had been a modest one. The UN secretary general promised to exert his efforts to secure the release of the detainees.

I also talked to him about returning the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) from Amman to Beirut, where its headquarters originally were before the war [in Lebanon], and invited him to visit Lebanon.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] On the political level, did you discuss with him during the meeting the latest developments pertaining to the peace process?

[Buwayz] Yes. The discussions centered on the situation in Southern Lebanon and Israel's claims that it always carries out its operations as a retaliation for the actions of the Lebanese resistance, while the siege Israel imposed on the Lebanese shores was not preceded by any resistance operations or even confrontations, and that was the reason that Israel later lifted it.

All this confirms the sort of policy Israel pursues in the region, particularly as it uses Southern Lebanon as a pressure card. In other words, whenever Israel faces a crisis internally, or externally in respect of the peace process, it finds no place other than Lebanon to carry out whatever it wishes. For this reason, I asked Dr. Butrus-Ghali to get Israel to take its hands off Lebanon.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Has Christopher's current tour produced any new proposals with regard to the Lebanese peace process?

[Buwayz] The results of Christopher's tour are not clear yet. However, we see them as mere oxygen aimed at activating the peace process.

We had hoped that he would bring with him some radical proposals dealing with such matters as the Israeli withdrawal and the ending of tension in the region.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you envisage the proposals which he should have brought with him during the current tour?

[Buwayz] We demand the foundations laid at Madrid, but Israel tries to present us with other propositions which will not lead any of us to a comprehensive peace in the region. The U.S. secretary of state should have brought with him a mechanism for the implementation of the Madrid principles and constants from which the Arab peace processes stemmed. For it is illogical that after the lapse of four years since the Madrid meeting we should begin to negotiate on principles that we are supposed to have finished dealing with.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Has Lebanon, during its recent contacts with the United States, raised the question of injecting life into the Lebanese peace process or separating it from the Syrian peace process?

[Buwayz] In all frankness, we have affirmed to the American Administration that the signing of the Lebanese peace accord was connected with the other Arab peace processes and in particular the Syrian peace process. In other words, that we would not be prepared to sign a peace accord in isolation from Syria.

As regards UN Resolution No. 425, nobody objects to its implementation by Israel, because it provides for its withdrawal so that peace and stability may reign. Resolution No. 425 does not provide for the signing of a peace accord with Israel. Consequently, Israel's withdrawal is followed by the second part of the peace process, namely, our discussing with the Israelis, the Syrians, and the other Arabs the question of the peace accord and the commitments it imposes. When we reach a developed and advanced stage in this regard, the Arab-Israeli peace could be signed.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Some voices have been demanding the convocation of a summit conference on the level of the cordon states in order to evaluate the Madrid stages. What is Lebanon's attitude in this regard?

[Buwayz] We support collective Arab coordination and have always called for it. Lebanon has asked on more than one occasion for the convocation of an Arab summit conference to evaluate the peace process and discuss matters pertaining to the region.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Will Lebanon put forward new proposals for the development of the work of the Arab League on the occasion of the passage of 50 years on its establishment?

[Buwayz] We are trying to benefit from the forthcoming Arab League meeting so that we may crystallize the unity of Arab ranks still further.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is your evaluation of the results of the Copenhagen Conference [on Social Development] and has it succeeded in fulfilling the purpose for which it was convened?

[Buwayz] The Copenhagen summit conference has dealt with basic and vital issues and we believe that all the world countries are in need of finding solutions for these issues. However, we have raised some questions about the extent of the [Copenhagen] summit conference resolutions in terms of implementation, particularly with regard to the negative results of wars and the importance of overcoming them. These matters require intensive programs of action so that we may attain real development. We in Lebanon are now working on integrated plans for the elimination of the after-effects of the war and the aggression. But this requires international support so as to make the steps being taken by the Lebanese state more effective.

Invitation Received for Disarmament Meeting

NC2203115995 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanon has received an official invitation to participate in meetings of the security and disarmament committee that is an offshoot of the multilateral talks, due to be held in Antalya, Turkey, from 3 to 8 April.

Complaint Lodged Against Israeli Blockade

NC2203081695 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli naval blockade of the south coast from al-Naqurah to al-Sarafand is continuing. Lebanon has lodged a complaint with the international maritime organization through the Lebanese Embassy in London. In the complaint, Transport Minister 'Umar Misqawi appealed to the organization to exert efforts to lift the blockade, which constitutes a flagrant violation of international law and a blatant act of aggression against Lebanese sovereignty over its territorial water.

Israeli Ships Force Fishermen Back

NC2203125995 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At dawn today, Israeli warships chased the boats of Lebanese fishermen along the coast from Ra's al-'Ayn in the south to Ra's al-Fanar in the north, firing shots at them and forcing them to return to the port, leaving their nets behind.

In addition, Israeli warplanes broke the sound barrier more than once over Sidon and the areas around it from 1030 until 1045. The hostile aircraft were flying at low altitudes over the town during this time.

Also, the occupation forces today shelled the deserted army barracks in al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, the outskirts of Kafr Rumman, and al-Maslakh district in al-Nabatiyah, injuring the 14-year old citizen Ahmad al-Hajj-'Ali. The outskirts of 'Arab Salim and the area of al-Wadi al-Akhdar also came under artillery shelling from the occupation position in al-Zaffatah. At 1145, the occupation artillery shelled the town of 'Ayn Bu-Siwar, the outskirts of Jba', the hills of Mlita, and the heights around Jabal Safi. In return, this morning Resistance men attacked al-Dabshah post with machine-gun and rocket fire, destroying the fortifications of the post.

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] media office issued a communique in Tyre which said that UNIFIL Official Spokesman Timor Goksel has been appointed political adviser for UNIFIL while retaining his original position. Goksel will also officially be handed the duties of relations and political affairs relating to UNICEF.

Paper Rejects Israeli 'Security Presence' on Golan

JN2203110095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 22 Mar 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "Land, Security, and Peace," AL-BA'TH comments on Israel's reaction to the opportunity offered by Syria to advance the peace process. Israel has started to stifle this opportunity by repeating impossible demands and conditions for its own interests and security. Israel deliberately and determinedly disregards the interests and security of others.

AL-BA'TH says: There is an occupier and an occupied territory. The occupier should return what it has occupied in full. The party whose land was occupied has the right to restore and liberate this territory by all means. Israel is still asking Syria to relinquish its territory. What sort of distorted logic is being adopted by someone who wants peace—if it truly wants peace?

Regarding security arrangements, AL-BA'TH states that any proposal which tips the scales in favor of Israel, even to a small degree, is rejected and is unrealistic. Syria can never accept any Israeli security presence [tawajud amni] on a single inch of its national soil. A just and comprehensive peace means purging the occupied land in full, down to the last occupying foot. This applies to the Golan and southern Lebanon.

The paper concludes: When Israel declares its commitment to this principle, then one can talk about a relaxation in the peace process and about expediting the achievement of its objectives.

AL-THAWRAH also comments on the Middle East peace process. It states that the peace march will not advance a single step unless Israel proposes something new, something stemming from a commitment to the Security Council resolutions. These resolutions state that there must be full Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Peace shall remain elusive unless Israel acknowledges this principle, which restores to the Arabs their land and rights in full, primarily guaranteeing everyone's rights and preserving their dignity.

Concluding, the paper calls on the entire world, especially the United States, to realize this fact and act vigorously to achieve a just and comprehensive peace and not allow Israel to waste this historic opportunity to achieve security and stability in the region.

Radio: 'Persistent' Efforts Toward Peace Needed

JN1903153195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 19 Mar 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The whole world is defending a comprehensive peace in the Middle East by not burying the elements of explosion in the sand or giving the impression that something has been achieved. Moreover, the world does not want to circumvent these realities, which could backfire on people at the first opportunity or under the first serious test.

In its strategic concept and comprehensive dimensions, peace is a state of multi-faceted stability that will be reflected on the whole world and not only on the Middle East peoples. Therefore, the world's concern about peace should be accompanied by persistent efforts to promote the peace process and remove its flaws and obstacles, and the traps into which it has fallen, both in terms of the overall peace process and the Palestinian and Jordanian tracks and agreements.

Israel rebelled against international legitimacy, failed to comply with its resolutions, and procrastinated over the implementation of the U.S. approaches and initiatives. Israel has thus contributed to pushing the region, and consequently the world, toward a state of ambiguity and uncertainty whose nature and future no one can predict.

Hence, curbing Israel and condemning its intransigent positions, its aggressive policies, and its methods, which circumvent the facts of this age, are an international responsibility if the world really wants to make a genuine contribution to the establishment of a just, comprehensive, and stable peace in the Middle East.

The region is now standing on the threshold of a new opportunity provided by the United States as part of its continued efforts to promote the peace process. But what will the situation be if Israel continues its known intransigent positions, which evade the basis of the peace process represented by accepting full withdrawal in return for full peace, and also if Israel continues its sophist debate on the serious issues, particularly the balanced [mutawazin] and equal [mutasawi] security that forms the basis of regional security?

Moreover, will the world allow Israel to once again waste a valuable opportunity for peace? A just and comprehensive peace has never been the creation of any party that isolates itself in a corner or enters dark corridors. This kind of peace should rather be honorable peace for all, and it is usually discussed by the various parties in an audible voice, with a declared position, and under the sun.

We will continue to seek this kind of peace because it is our strategic peace and the option from which we will not depart. We will not pay any attention to other kinds of peace because the picture is extremely clear to any party that wants to achieve real peace.

'More Effective' U.S. Role in Peace Process Urged

JN2103151995 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ever since the United States announced its peace initiative in July, 1991, the Madrid conference was convened, and the Washington talks were launched, Israel has been placing obstacles in the way of a just and comprehensive peace in the region by insisting on its conditional approval, as former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir did, and by striking unilateral deals that are being marketed by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. These deals conflict with the Madrid conference and the U.S. initiative, which stress the principle of land for peace and which consider UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 a basis for achieving a just and comprehensive peace on all tracks of the conflict.

Israel's attempt to empty the U.S. initiative of its substance by refusing to implement the said Security Council's resolutions is an attempt to disavow the requirements of international legitimacy, particularly Israel's withdrawal to the 4 June 1967, border in accordance with Resolution 242, which bans the acquisition of land by force. Israel's aim is to weaken the role of every international reference by preventing it from playing any effective role in the peace process.

This was clarified by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who said that in the final analysis, Christopher is just a postman. This means in Israel's view that Christopher's role is restricted only to carrying messages and that the principle of partnership is out of the question in Israel's calculations. At least, Israel will do its utmost to keep U.S. role secondary and confined to conveying messages.

Gentlemen: Israel's attempt to contain and weaken the U.S. partnership in the peace process is aimed at containing the U.S. initiative itself and, consequently, emptying it of its substance by blocking the principle of land for peace. This will enable Israel to disavow international legitimacy under the cover of the U.S. initiative. This is what Israel did with 'Arafat in the Oslo agreement when it dictated its conditions on him. That is why the agreement is devoid of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the right to Palestinian national sovereignty on the ground.

Moreover, Rabin did not conceal his joy over the announcement of the Oslo agreement. He said that the Washington talks, which are branches of the Madrid conference, had proved to be futile. Peace to Israel does not mean the implementation of the U.S. initiative based on the UN resolutions, but means dictating Israel's conditions to legalize the occupation—a move which is not recognized by international law but by the parties to the unilateral deals. Such peace, built on unilateral deals, will not be a true one and will never last because it lacks justice, equality [musawah], and comprehensiveness.

Gentlemen: President Hafiz al-Asad has asserted that peace to Syria is a strategic option. This clearly means that our position on peace is not dictated by transient or tactical circumstances, but is an ongoing objective to end the occupation and aggression and to achieve security and stability for all parties in the conflict. In light of our clear vision of peace, we supported the U.S. initiative, we helped in launching the peace process, and we have been exerting efforts along with the two sponsors of the peace process, particularly with the United States, to implement the U.S. initiative on all tracks of the conflict.

While stressing the need for the United States to play a more effective role in the peace process, we adhere to a comprehensive and just solution, contrary to Israel's attempts to disavow the requirements of peace based on the U.S. initiative and to derail the peace process from the Madrid reference in order to single out this or that party apart from any international commitments. Rabin said that the role of U.S. Secretary of State Christopher was that of a postman. The U.S. role should not be confined to that of a postman if the peace process is to be advanced. The results of the current U.S.-sponsored Washington talks will clarify how far the U.S. Administration has decided to play the role of a full partner in the peace process.

Afghanistan

Rabbani Restates Readiness To Transfer Power

LD2103222495 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1620 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Speech by President Borhanoddin Rabbani marking New Year's Day, in Kabul on 21 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted]

We start the new year of 1374 at a time when hopes and possibilities for peace across the country are more manifest than at any other time. Internal, regional, and international conditions are all against the continuation of war and hostility. All attempts of the internal warmongers and their foreign backers—who ignited the flames of war to realize their sinister aim of the disintegration of the country, the dominance of the aliens, the elimination of the lofty goals and wishes of the jihad—all these have faced failure and shame before the determination of the faithful nation and the resistance of the myth-makers, the gallant sons of Afghanistan. History has clearly shown that the nation of Afghanistan has never accepted the influence and dominance of foreigners. The resistance of the people of the country is among the shining pages of the history of Afghanistan. Those who want to become an instrument for the influence of the aliens in their country [words indistinct] will have no end but a definite decimation before the determination of the nation and shame. The Islamic state cordially asks all forces and concerned sides to take the path of negotiation and the political solution of the matters instead of war, and to contribute in a meritworthy and correct manner to the restoration of peace and security and to the reconstruction of our ruined homeland and to the economic development and progress of our beloved, united, independent country instead of causing ill-security and destruction.

The state supports any effort that will restore security and peace in the country. We have warmly welcomed the efforts of the United Nations and its special mission with Mahmoud Mestiri as its head. And the recent proposal of the UN mission on the formation of a council with two representatives from every province enjoys our approval and support. We want the United Nations to speed up its work to set up this proposed council. The state is ready for any cooperation with this effort. We clearly declare, those in charge of the Islamic state and their sincere colleagues, who acquired the responsibility of the defense of the independence, territorial integrity, and national unity of the country, and who have given extensive sacrifices at the most dangerous juncture of the history of the country and have, as during the jihad days, offered thousands of martyrs on every inch of this country's soil, now, respecting the will of the nation, are ready to transfer power concurrent with the formation of a council that represents the people and provinces as s envisaged by the UN initiative. And we and our comrades in struggle will carry out our religious duty and national debt of serving with pride—as soldiers in any trench and any position we hold—the dear Islam, the oppressed and heroic nation, and the beloved homeland. The authorities and employees of state organs are aware that the new situation that has emerged in the country is a harbinger of permanent peace and security. It is the requirement of the new situation that work will be done with more regularity and speed.

I instruct you people-serving organs to carry on related jobs with more piety, interest, and sympathy to serve the compatriots and to alleviate their problems and needs and to establish scrupulous working order and discipline. All government organs and administrations are duty-bound to work in their original work sites. From now on they should seriously begin the reconstruction of their original work places as a part of the reconstruction of the Kabul city and their country. I hope that in the near future administrative order will be consolidated and established in keeping with the requirements of the Afghan society.

Officials of the heroic army and brave mojahedin, your sacrifices and heroism in connection with the mopping-up of the nests of sedition and corruption and the crushing of the aliens' agents will be registered in bold letters in the contemporary history of the country. You brave and faithful sons [of this country] have paid with merit your debt to the country and have fulfilled your mission to protect the independence, national unity, territorial integrity, and Islamic sovereignty of the country. Like your myth-making fathers, you have salvaged the independent and united Afghanistan from the clutches of conspiracies, interferences, military interventions of the aggressors, warmongers, and alien-lovers. The appreciative people of Afghanistan and the Islamic state watch your achievements with happiness. They are confident that in the future too you will respond with Afghan and Islamic resoluteness to the agent of the adventurists and aliens. We are proud of you. Further strengthen your ranks and files, and further organize your combat readiness.

Youths of the country, as the future epoch-making power of the country, you rest at the center of the attention of the Islamic state. The provision of capabilities for your education is one of the priorities of the state. Regretfully as a result of the warmongering acts and the interferences of the foreign circles over the past years, the possibility of education could not be offered to you. Now that with grace of God and as a result of the heroism of the brave army and the mojahedin the city of Kabul has been cleared of the seditious elements, education centers are speedily becoming ready for the commencement of the educational activities. The advice of the Islamic state to you is to continue your studies seriously with the start of the new year of 1372 [starting 21 March]. The nation and country look with hope to you. By learning skills and scientific and vocational merits, you should make your country prosperous. Do not forget your great Islamic, national, and historic mission. Make preparations for the fulfilment of great tasks from now on.

Officials in charge of the country's educational and training departments: Once the city of Kabul is fully cleared [of opposition armed groups] and security is established in the city, it is your duty to prepare schools, madrasa [religious schools], and educational and training institutes so that educational activities can be resumed. Thanks to God, security is fully established in every part of Kabul city, therefore, there is no reason for dear refugees to occupy the educational centers. Esteemed refugees should returned to their homes and the armed groups should be transferred to their original places of deployment.

The country's children, youths, and young men are impatiently waiting for your action in this respect, and for the reopening of the schools and educational and training centers as soon as possible.

The doors of Kabul University were closed for three years due to the existence of armed groups and saboteurs inside its compound. It is again ready to resume educational activities as a result of the establishment of peace and security and clearing up operations carried out in south and west of Kabul. Although it has sustained enormous damage, the Islamic Government is confident that as a result of kindness and work by the university's leadership, lecturers, and students, it will be able to turn into a great center for science and knowledge and scientific research in the country. For its part, the government is ready for any type of cooperation and assistance in implementing this great mission.

Traders and national businessmen: You are the ever active force behind the society's progress and advancement. At such a moment when the country has an urgent need for expansion of services and an increase in economic activities, your duty and national Islamic debt requires that you play an historic role in resolving the people's problems and in reactivating the wheels of economic transformation. The unrest which ruled Kabul city in the last three years is now over. It is hoped that your role and part will be noticeable more than at any other time in reconstruction of historic Kabul and in reopening the factories and industrial apparatus and expanding trade and business. You should rush to rebuild your city and reconstruct your country, cooperating with your people at such a sensitive time. The country's history will never forget the honest, kind, and patriotic implementation of this important role by you.

Armed groups and those forces involved in the country's problems: The fighting will not bring about any result but destruction and liquidation. Our message to each of these brothers is: Leave aside guns and missiles. Seek a solution for all the issues through talks and negotiations. Let us come and decide about our urgent national issues by holding jergas [councils] and consultation, with a feeling of Islamic brotherhood and based on our accepted, good, and national traditions. Whatever is decided by the people of Afghanistan will have the full respect of the Islamic government.

Concerning a group called Taleban [religious students], it should be added: The Islamic State has deep respect for the divine scholars who are the true learned people believing in prophet Muhammad. The real Taleban from the religious schools are the guardians of the great Islamic culture and affairs. Based on this belief and in accordance with the fact that the main section of the leadership of the government have come from among this group and have deep awareness of the high Islamic values, they [the leadership] supported and welcomed this movement at the beginning when its slogan was to establish peace and fight the unlawful things. But the influence of suspicious elements distorted the direction of this movement toward defaming the religious scholars and Taleban and hostility with Islam and implementing the sinister aims of the foreigners.

The savage missile attacks on Kabul city by this group and their continued fighting against the government and mojahedin are a manifestation of this fact that the will of the group are now in the hands of the enemies of religious scholars and of the Taleban of the religious schools. Otherwise, the savage killing of the innocent people of Kabul cannot be explained in any religious book or any religious teachings.

We ask the real students of the religious schools to separate their ranks from the dubious elements and the agents of Islam's enemies and to cooperate with the Islamic state and other Islamic groups for the restoration of security and the cessation of war and conflagration. Dear compatriots, we hope that the new year of 1372 will be the year of the realization of your peace-seeking wishes and that guns and rockets will not disrupt the calm and confidence of the people. I ask Almighty God to protect the nation of Afghanistan from the ills of any bad incident and bestow on you dear compatriots calmness, prosperity, security, and welfare. I hope that beloved Afghanistan will take steady steps toward peace and progress in the atmosphere of prosperity and confidence and understanding to ensure its reconstruction [words indistinct]. It is appropriate here to thank two groups for their services: First, the ulema council which started work bravely after the 11 Jadi [1 January 1994] coup d'etat. Not only have they worked to teach the people from the pulpits but also they have helped the displaced people of Kabul. An now they are rendering a good service in revealing the dubious faces of the Taleblikes and distinguish them from the students of the religious schools. Second, the security commission which has rendered unforgettable services in connection with the security of Kabul city, the mopping up of the irresponsible groups, and the clearing up of the nests of sedition and corruption. I ask from God more success for them to serve better the country, the religion, and the oppressed people. [passage omitted]

Samangan Mojahedin Free Villages From 'Enemy'

LD2003190495 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In an operation by the Samangan Province mojahedin, the villages of Chaichal, Bayana, Sar-e Jar, Baluch, [name indistinct] and some other villages in Dara-e Suf, in Samangan, have been freed from the occupation of the enemy. Dozens of various types of weapons including Kalashnikovs, PK machine guns, guns, mortars, ZK1's, and rockets have been captured by the mojahedin. Similarly a number of the opponents of the state sovereignty were taken prisoner.

Iran

U.S. 'War Minister' Using 'Fear' During Tour

LD2203112795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0946 GMT 22 Mar 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Winston Churchill, the well known British politician, has said that what holds alliances together is fear. This policy has been on the U.S. Administration's agenda for a long time. As we see, the U.S. war minister [title as heard; Secretary of Defense William Perry] is trying, during his tour of Persian Gulf littoral countries, to open the eyes of Arabs to the threats posed by Iran and Iraq by showing them so-called satellite photographs. Currently in Bahrain, he tried in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to persuade those countries' officials of the need to cooperate more closely with the United States and of the importance of U.S. access to those countries' air and sea bases.

The U.S. war minister will pursue this same policy today and during the next few days in Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. Next week other U.S. officials will visit the region to remove any remaining doubts.

These efforts are being made in circumstances in which the small Persian Gulf littoral countries have, in reality, been transformed into armed military garrisons, signing new agreements for buying and stockpiling weapons with each passing day. The United States, too, has deployed one aircraft carrier and 17 warships, with 18,000 troops, in the Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman, and the Red Sea.

Despite all of this, it was announced yesterday that 600 arms manufacturing companies from 50 countries are taking part in a military exhibition in Abu Dhabi. In 1372 [Iranian year beginning 21 March 1993], the UAE bought $3.62 billion worth of tanks from French companies alone. In this year's exhibition, too, contracts have been signed so far with U.S. companies for the purchase of 12 multipurpose helicopters, with a value of $300-350 million. One U.S. company has also been given the job of establishing a communications system for the UAE's Army, using fiber optics, at a cost of $119 million.

The fact of the matter is that the U.S. war minister's tour and the presence of arms manufacturing companies in the Persian Gulf region are completely in keeping with one another. They provide an opportunity to sell outdated weapons, the maintenance of which demands great expenditure.

The experience provided by the invasion of Kuwait revealed that, due to the makeup of the population in and the smallness of those countries, the concept of an army is little more than a formality for them, such that Iraqi troops were able to occupy Kuwait by merely marching into that country.

Therefore, it seems as if the military purchases of the Persian Gulf littoral countries are, more than being an indication of defense requirements and the need to confront possible threats, a sign of the debt they have to repay to Western countries.

Commentary Views Turkish Offensive in Iraq

LD2203111795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0945 GMT 22 Mar 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] A few hours after the start of the New Year, 35,000 soldiers of the Turkish Army entered northern Iraq. This offensive, which is described as the greatest operation by the Turkish Army in its contemporary history, is designed to suppress the forces of the Kurdistan's Workers Party [PKK] of that country.

The PKK is active alongside the Iran and Iraq borders in the northeastern and southeastern provinces of Turkey. It has leftist and separatist inclinations and has resorted to a campaign against Turkish central government in the past 10 years.

According to a military statement issued by the Turkish Army, during the course of the operation the country's soldiers have opened a front 22 km long and entered 40 km deep inside Iraqi soil. At the same time, Turkish fighter planes bombarded a number of targets located 110 km deep inside Iraq.

In 1371 [year beginning 21 March 1992], a force including 10,000 soldiers entered northern Iraq. Also in 1372 [beginning 21 March 1993] Turkish fighter planes bombarded vast regions in the Kurd-inhibited regions of Iraq.

The Turkish Army operations inside Iraqi territory are being carried out in those regions that were declared safe regions by the UN Security Council following the war that resulted from the occupation of Kuwait. There are 40 Western planes deployed at Turkish air bases to protect the said regions.

During the years of the imposed, based on an agreement that was signed between the Turkish Government and the Iraqi regime, permission was given to the Turkish Army to infiltrate 40 km deep inside Iraqi territory in pursuit of Kurdish rebels. Therefore, the Iraqi Government and press have remained silent toward the Turkish Army offensive. The U.S. Government has, in a tacit agreement, supported the suppression of Kurds.

Despite this, the European Union has criticized the Turkish Government action and described it as a violation of sovereignty of that country [Iraq].

In a telephone call between Suleyman Demirel and our country's president, the Turkish president emphasized the respect that Ankara attaches to the protection of Iraq's territorial integrity and has given a commitment that immediately after the removal of the unrest arising from the Kurdish revolts, the Turkish soldiers will leave Iraq.

In 1371, when the Turkish soldiers remained four weeks in northern Iraq, thousands of people were displaced from their homes and took refugee in neighboring areas. Therefore, as past experiences show, the fear still remains that thousands of defenseless people might suffer and become homeless. In view of the situation that exists in northern Iraq the commitment to protect Iraq's territorial integrity enjoys special importance.

Khamene'i Delivers New Year Message

LD2103142395 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0216 GMT 21 Mar 95

[New Year's Day speech to the nation by Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i on 21 March, place not given—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Oh, you who can change people's hearts; oh, you who can change night into day; oh, you who can change anyone's spirit, we pray you to change our spirits for the better today. [previous words in Arabic]

I would like to convey my greetings to all of you dear compatriots and to our great and honorable nation on the occasion of Nowruz and the start of the New Year; and especially to the pious and selfless men and women who have made special efforts to maintain the pride of this country and this nation and for the victory of this revolution; and to the honorable families of the martyrs, the selfless devotees [war disabled], the former POWs and their families, as well as the families of those missing in action and our dear and innocent remaining POWs.

I would also like to convey my greetings to the other nations who celebrate Nowruz: the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Afghan nation, the nations of the Central Asian republics, and others, as well as Iranians throughout the world.

This year, our New Year coincided with a great sorrow. The shadow of the loss of the dear son of the late Imam [Khomeyni], may God be satisfied with his deeds, weighs heavily on this New Year and this new spring. We hope that God will have mercy at this difficult time on this nation and especially on that honorable family, his suffering mother, his eminent wife and dear children, and other relatives and families connected with them.

At the start of my remarks, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the great Iranian nation. The nation showed tremendous sympathy on the occasion of this sad event [Ahmad Khomeyni's death] and they conveyed again, for the tenth or I should say the hundredth time, their allegiance and devotion to their honorable imam.

During the year that has just ended, the dear Iranian nation displayed its presence on the scene with strength and in force—as it has on several occasions, whether in response to deaths and the loss of dear ones or in response to important social anniversaries. Throughout 1373 the Iranian nation displayed for all the world to see its great revolutionary and Islamic nature with its great presence on the various anniversaries, such as in the rallies on 22 Bahman [corresponding to 11 February, the anniversary of the revolution] and on Jerusalem Day and on other occasions, as well as in response to the sad occasions when the nation lost great people.

The million strong presence of the people on these occasions, in the streets and in full public view of all the nations of the world, demonstrated four things. First, the nation's political stand. Second, the nation's enthusiastic spirit and full loyalty to Islam, the revolution, the eminent leader [as heard], and to this nation's selfless officials. Third, our nation's vitality of spirit; a nation which was on the stage and demonstrated its presence on all the important occasions. Fourth, social hope and the fact that this nation is a hopeful and optimistic one.

These four points, that is, the political stand, loyalty, vitality, and social hope are the sum total revealed by all the great rallies in which our nation took part last year, especially during the past few months, during Ramadan, during the recent sad event, in response to the martyrdom of our air force commanders, the demise of the eminent marja' [source of emulation] the late Grand Ayatollah Araki, and other events.

I would like to tell our dear nation that this great presence of the Iranian nation on occasions when their presence was necessary is an indication of divine power and God's force. This is exactly what I was referring to when I said: Oh, you who can change people's hearts; when I said: Oh, you who can change night into day. God can control people's hearts, he can guide lives and spirits. So much propaganda is being carried out against Iran, against Iranians, against the Islamic system, and against all the currents and events in this country. This is being done by the world's big leaders and propagandists. The media instruments which are under the control of arrogance and the Zionists constantly bombard this nation with propaganda.

At the same time, when you see how this nation appears on the stage, in response to enemy propaganda, with such pride, steadfastness, self-reliance, and enthusiasm you realize that this is God's intervention, it is God's power over hearts and lives and that this foiling of enemy plots is in accordance with God's plan and will. We must always remember this great and vital role of God, which is the crucial role in the world. Every single individual, the country's officials, the people who place value on themselves in this society, in this country, and on this earth—a correct, human value, a true Islamic value—must have faith in God's resolve and God's power over hearts and lives; they must know that everything is achieved in accordance with God's will and power and the successful nation and the successful individual improves his relationship with exalted God with each passing day, increases his devotion and service to God each day.

The year which has just ended, the year 1373, was filled with great effort and great success in our country. From the political point of view—whether on an international scale or in terms of events which are of particular importance to the Iranian nation—the Iranian nation's presence was a powerful one and the country's foreign policy officials truly and in all fairness achieved great things with reliance on this very trust and support demonstrated by the nation. The Iranian nation stood proud on the international stage; many of the enemies' accusations were proved false and the enemies of the Iranian nation, of the Islamic Republic, and of this country's territorial integrity were defeated in various ways.

On the domestic stage, that is, in the arena of reconstruction, renewal, and of laying the foundations for a correct system of life in the country from the point of view of economics and the construction of the essential pillars of the future economy, truly and in all fairness great achievements were made and officials were able to do valuable things. We hope that these works will continue and we hope the Iranian nation will strengthen its sincere links with the authorities. May the nation also demonstrate its unity and solidarity on the arena of reconstruction and life. And may the course of reconstruction in the country continue moving forward, God willing.

On New Year's Day last year, that is, on the same occasion in 1373, I recommended two points to the nation and to the government. These two points were: Work conscience and social discipline. On the basis of my own analysis, these two topics could and can speed up the Iranian nation's move toward victory and toward building a prosperous and free Islamic Iran. Of course, the state authorities and the officials in charge of various economic and cultural issues and the mass media have spoken or written articles about these two subjects. They confirmed that these two points are indeed important. Some tasks were also carried out to help the realization of these two points.

This year, at the start of 1374, I wish to reiterate the same points. I would also like to add that only by looking at the achievements can we conclude that the recommended two points have been implemented. That is, higher production figures in the country, better quality products, smoother running of administrative, social, and economic affairs, greater abundance of essential commodities, and more extensive reconstruction works all indicate that the work conscience in our society is fully awakened. [passage omitted].

We have made some progress, but I must say the progress has not been sufficient.

With regard to social discipline, we can feel the true realization of this point if we can observe that there are fewer instances of social offenses, less law-breaking, fewer instances of crime, and greater respect for the law. Again, we have seen some progress, there has been some effort but not as much as I, as a humble person, expected. Our society needs more achievements.

I would like to recommend two points this year too. These are two pieces of advice. The first one is that last year's two recommendations should be kept alive. [passage omitted]. My second piece of advice is also highly important for our society. The expression I have chosen to convey my meaning is: financial and economic discipline. This is what I am requesting from the nation and the country's officials this year.

Financial and economic discipline means confronting squandering, excess, wastage, financial carelessness, overspending, and overconsumption. These are not by any means good traits. We cannot call it generosity or kindness, we can only call it lack of financial and economic discipline.

People who spend needlessly, who overspend, who consume too much, who do not take society's resources from the economic point of view into account are people whom I can only call undisciplined—financially and economically. Such a nation will face problems.

When people spend, if we say: Why did you spend so much? Why did you hold such an unnecessary party with such extravagance? He answers: I can afford it. Is this a good enough reason? That you can afford it? No, this is not a good reason at all. You must spend in proportion to your needs, as much as is necessary, especially so where people who spend public funds are concerned. Of course, this also relates to people who use their own resources; they too are overspending. Some of them are rich. God willing, they have money gained through legitimate means—those who have gained it illegally are in an even worse predicament. As far as those who gained their money legitimately are concerned, if they indulge in excess in spending, in their lifestyle, in unnecessary luxuries, in ostentatious frivolity, they have shown lack of financial and economic discipline. This is called squandering and it is a bad thing. It makes life difficult for other people, both in psychological terms and in real terms. It wastes economic resources. For example, if you unnecessarily use large quantities of food for an ordinary party. There are people not far from you and in various parts of the country who desperately need that food for their survival and for their children. Can you claim that what you are doing is right?

Therefore, even in relation to personal property and property gained legally, squandering is wrong. It shows lack of discipline. All this is even more true in the case of people who are spending government resources. I would like to ask officials to earnestly strive not to use public resources where there is no priority—even if a need exists, but not an urgent need. I am talking about situations in which one has to weigh that which is merely necessary against that which is desperately necessary. Let them not spend at all where there is no need at all and, where there is a need but there also exists an even greater need, let them also not spend. Let the financial resources only be used for the greatest need. That is my advice to you for this year.

I hope that the country's officials will do their utmost in this regard: cultural officials in a cultural way and economic, administrative and executive officials in an implementational way.

To conclude my New Year address, I wish to offer a few words of advice to some of our neighbors who also celebrate Nowruz. In the New Year, they should try to end or reduce the major tragic events which are taking place in some nations, and to stop bloodshed. That, unfortunately, is what we are now seeing in a number of our neighboring countries, such as Afghanistan. The events of Afghanistan are very painful to us and we are concerned about the bloodshed and fratricide which is committed without pursuing any particular principle or clear and correct goal. They are mostly power-seeking acts.

The Afghan nation, the country's officials, and the leaders of various groups and parties should definitely pay attention to this point: that nations may not react to such actions, or not have the opportunity to protest, but in the long run we have seen, particularly in the past, that such incorrect policies will be attributed to those who carried them out and they will be embarrassed.

We pray to God almighty for an auspicious year for our people. God willing, 1374 will be a happy and prosperous year for the Iranian nation, a year in which we shall see blessings, progress in various economic, social, and cultural fields, a year which brings major political achievements, a year of disappointment for our enemies, and a year of prosperity for each individual of the nation. [passage omitted]

Peace and mercy be upon you.

Council Opposes Regulations Against Antennae

95LA0129J London KEYHAN in Persian 19 Jan 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] A few hours after Brigadier Guard General Seyfollahi made his announcement that satellite antennae will be removed, the Council of Guardians determined that two important articles in the bill were contrary to Article 75 of the Constitution. The Council of Guardians determined that those two articles add more expenses for the government. The second article is as follows:

The Ministry of Interior is responsible for removing satellite antennae as soon as possible with the help of security and Basij forces.

This article, which allows the Guards and Basij to go to peoples' homes, has caused worries and protests by satellite antenna owners, and 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, minister of interior, announced that no orders have been issued yet to security forces for removal of antennae.

Article 3 of the bill banning satellite antennae, if implemented, can cause serious problems for importers, producers, distributors, and repairers of satellite antennae. This article states: The Ministry of Interior, in cooperation with the Ministry of Intelligence, is responsible for using available means to prevent the import and distribution of satellite antennae, to confiscate attempted imports, and submit the violators to revolution courts.

Violators have to be a 10 million tuman fine.

Also, the Council of Guardians found paragraph B of article 9 in the bill to be contrary to article 53 of the Constitution. This paragraph states that all collected fines will be deposited into the public treasury according to law.

In a letter to the speaker of the Majles, the Council of Guardians reminded him that the fact that article 2 of the bill requires immediate implementation upon approval is contrary to article 11, which provides one month to the Ministry of Interior to enact regulations referred to in article 11. Seyfollahi warned people that if people do not remove their antennae on their own, security forces will carry out the task.

Article 75 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic states:

Bills and amendments offered by deputies that reduce revenues or increase expenses, must stipulate the means by which the lost revenue or increased expenses will be compensated before they can be approved.

Public Resisting Antennae Collections

95LA0129E London KEYHAN in Persian 12 Jan 95 pp 1, 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister of Internal Affairs 'Ali Mohammad Besharati announced that no orders have been issued for removal of satellite antennae yet. Besharati made this statement following strong public distress over attacks on their homes by basij forces in Bushehr. Some residents of Tehran, in conversations with radio stations abroad, called removal of satellite antennae, especially by basij and sepah troops, wrong and useless. They pointed to the dire consequences that will follow for the regime as a result of such actions. Besharati called on people to demand identification cards from agents who contact homes and offices for this purpose. The Islamic Republic's interior minister mentioned that, after the law is enacted, his ministry will give two weeks to owners of antennae to remove them.

A few days ago, when this bill was discussed in the Majles, the limit of three years on the law was not approved. Therefore, satellite antennae will be banned permanently.

Meanwhile, it was announced: Importers, producers, and distributors of satellite antennae will have their property confiscated and will be made to pay a fine of 10 million tumans.

Such fines are in addition to a fine of up to one-half million tumans on each owner of a satellite antenna. Such funds will be provided to the Ministry of Islamic Guidance for combatting the cultural onslaught. In Article 10 of the law, the ban on satellite antennae is stated as: Through utilization of legal and international means, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, in conjunction with the Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Telephone, and other relevant agencies, are responsible for protecting the country's culture and family values against destructive and degraded programs broadcast by satellites. No interpretation has been given as to the meaning of protection of culture through legal and international means. Also, programs that are destructive and degrading, as well as the method of countering them, have not been identified.

To assess the situation of antennae and their distribution, flights were made over the capital on 1 January.

One of the owners of satellite antennae told London KEYHAN: The Islamic Republic regime is incapable of solving vital problems facing the nation, yet it insists on creating a new problem for itself. He added: The regime's excuse in removing antennae is the cultural onslaught and the impact of Western television programs on morality and behavior of our youth. But, this regime must understand that the rich and ancient Iranian culture will not be undermined by a few television programs—most of them are indeed useful. Furthermore, a culture that can be undermined by television programs is indeed very shaky. Which country has ever lost its culture and traditions as a result of television programs?

This lady said: We know that these are all excuses and that the Islamic Republic's worry is for our youth to learn about world events and gain independence of mind instead of being brainwashed by listening to the nonsense uttered by the regime officials.

According to this housewife in Tehran, the dispatch of a group of inexperienced youth, equipped with weapons, to people's homes and causing problems for citizens will only increase the dissatisfaction and create an atmosphere of fear, anarchy, and bribery with no results to be gained. Furthermore, so far people themselves have had control over satellite programs they watch, but from now on people will be forced to buy video copies of any program available to entertain themselves in the face of a regime that provides them with no alternatives.

Former President Abolhasan Banisadr told the Persian program of the BBC: Totalitarian regimes are continuously busy creating an atmosphere of fear and terror so that their rule may last. In an interview with the Persian program of the BBC, Ehsan Naraqi, an Iranian sociologist and adviser to UNESCO, said that even those who are members of the opposition to the Islamic Republic would not have been able to cause such animosity toward the regime. The Iranian regime is committing a mistake similar to the change of the calender by the late Shah. God willing, the Council of Guardians will stop this action.

Satellites Affecting Prayer Attendance

95LA0129M London KEYHAN in Persian 26 Jan 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] As a result of spreading satellite antennae in small towns and remote villages, fewer people attend Friday prayer sermons. It has also left an impact on the thinking of the less educated strata and even the religious class. This has caused Friday prayer imams to attack satellite television programs.

Informed observers believe that the government of Rafsanjani and his cabinet ministers do not consider satellite television programs harmful to people, but radicals and clergy in the regime, as well as KEYHAN and RESALAT dailies, consider it an information security breach. They cite such examples as international programs that present discussions on Iran or the court trial on the murder of Dr. Bakhtiar and Dr. Sharafkandi, during which some Iranian experts appear on television and give interviews.

The same observers state that presently the 14 border provinces in Iran benefit from foreign television programs. Also, they point to the Council of Guardians' opposition to the bill, which increases the odds in favor of antennae.

Export of Petrochemicals, Metals Banned

LD1903212295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 19 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The headquarters for supporting the plan for regulating the market has made a number of decisions on the provision of tens of different types of essential goods needed by the people in the year 1374 [starting 21 March 1995], and on preventing major changes in the price of the goods that are included in the plan for regulating the market, as well as a number of government penalties [ta'zirat], which will be carried out in the coming year.

In today's meeting of the headquarters, it was announced that tens of different types of essential and necessary goods that are subject to the plan for regulating the market and government penalties will be provided by the Ministry of Commerce and other relevant ministries without any major change in their prices. These goods will be placed at the disposal of the public from the beginning of the new year in accordance with the plans for regulating the market.

In the continuation of this meeting, a report was submitted by the secretariat of the headquarters for supporting the plan for regulating the market about the level of the changes in the price of some goods and services as the result of the increase in the price of fuel and increases in salaries.

On the basis of this report, the level of increase in the prices of many goods and services will be less than 4 percent on average. The increases in salaries have been calculated on the basis of the labor requirements of various productive units.

In this meeting another report was submitted by the Markazi Bank on the steps taken by that bank to provide necessary funds for purchasing the essential goods needed by the people during the past few months, as well as allocating funds for the coming year.

In this meeting it was decided that in the year 1374 the export will be banned of all petrochemical products, different types of metals including steel, copper, aluminum and synthetic fiber, as well as other raw material needed by the domestic industries. Only when domestic needs are met, will the producers be allowed to export those items after obtaining a permit from the Ministry of Commerce.

According to this report, concerning the price of petrochemical products, steel, copper and aluminum in the coming year, it was decided that the price of those items should be based on the prices in the year 1373, as well as the calculation of a percentage of additional costs due to fuel and salaries, provided that the average increase is less than 8 percent.

*India To Help Build Chemical Factory in Qeshm

95LA0102H Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 12 Jan 95 p 13

[FBIS Translated Text] Iran and Indian chemical fertilizer companies are to collaborate in the construction of a chemical fertilizer factory in the Qeshm free-trade zone. Engineer Bushehri, executive director of the Qeshm free-trade zone, speaking in an interview with IRNA, said: An investment of $350 million is expected for this producing unit. After it goes into operation it will be capable of producing 100,000 tons of fertilizer annually.

Construction of this unit will begin next year after agreement is reached on the price of gas.

The executive director of the Qeshm free-trade zone discussed the construction of a ferromanganese factory in the zone, for which the groundbreaking ceremonies will be held in the next few days. He said: This unit has a capacity of 30,000 tons, and it will be given 60 billion rials [R] in credits.

The Qeshm Metals Company and the Esfahan Iron Foundry are investing to build this industrial unit, and it will go into operation in the next two years.

All of this unit's machinery is to be built inside the country, and when it goes into operation $20 million in foreign exchange will be saved each year.

The executive director of the Qeshm free-trade zone discussed the construction of a methanol factory on this island. He said: At its latest meeting the Supreme Free-trade Zones Council approved a measure on the basis of which, with the participation of foreign countries, an MTBE [methyltributyl ether] methanol petrochemical factory is to be built at the Qeshm free-trade zone.

The products from this unit will be used for the consumption of unleaded gasoline.

He explained: To industrialize the zone, with Japanese participation and $250 million in investment, a porous iron factory will be built.

This project is going through the credit phases. After that the construction of this factory will begin.

*New Industrial Units To Become Operational

95LA0125A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 24 Jan 95 p 17

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Service—When 366 industrial units become operational during the 10 days of Fajr, more than 15,000 people will be employed in the country.

According to a report by the Public Relations Office of the Ministry of Industries, more than 969 billion rials [R] have been invested to start operation of the above units, which will create 15,479 new jobs.

This report indicates that the provinces of Kermanshah and Khuzestan, each with 35 industrial units; Tehran, with 31 units; Hamadan, with 20 units; Western Azerbaijan, with 20 units; and Gilan, with 18 units, have the largest number of industrial units that have become operational.

Also, in the province of Sistan va Baluchestan, with two units; Zanjan, with five units; Bushehr, with six units; and Ardabil, with seven units, the lowest numbers of industrial units have been put into operation.

The report of the Public Relations Office of the Ministry of Industries also indicates that the above units are in the electricity and electronics, metal, chemical, textile and clothing, food, medicine, and nonmetal minerals areas. Among the most significant include the opening of Ghonchehparvar Baby Food, cotton spinning, Mah Thread, Iranian Camper Manufacturing in Tehran province, Yazd Tire Industrial Complex, with 13,500 tons of various types of tires and inner tubes annually, and several large ceramics manufacturing units.

Over 5,000 Units Inaugurated

95LA0102B Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 15 Jan 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Kerman, IRNA—According to the deputy minister of industries for non-metallic industries, more than 5,000 industrial units have gone into operation in the country during the First Five-Year Plan.

Engineer Naji said on Saturday: During this period the production in the country of stoves, water heaters, and refrigerators grew 200 percent.

According to him, the production of cement also increased from 12 million tons to 16 million tons. In view of existing planning, the figure is to reach 26,000 tons [as published] by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan.

He said: Currently the nation's industrial units are exporting to more than 20 nations, and in some cases, such as ceramic tiles, Iran's production is equal to that of the Western nations.

He said that exports during the First Five-Year Plan from industrial units were $5 billion.

The deputy minister of industries for non-metallic industries added: The increase in the price of foreign exchange and the lack of an increase in banking means created problems for the nation's industries.

During the last two days the deputy ministers of industries for non-metallic industries and industrial development visited several producing units in Kerman and Bam.

Tire Production to Increase to 200,000 Tons

95LA0102D Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 12 Jan 95 p 13

[FBIS Translated Text] IRNA—By the end of the Second Five-Year Plan, tire production in the country will be up to 200,000 tons per year.

The level of this year's tire production was announced as 110,000 tons. This announcement was made by Engineer Hasan Mo'tamed-Reza'i, director of the Chemical and Cellulose Industries Group in the Foundation for the Oppressed and Disabled in an interview with IRNA's correspondent.

He noted: The nation's current practical tire production capacity is already 125,000 tons per year, by the five factories that produce this product.

Mo'tamed-Reza'i discussed the tire industry development projects in the Second Five-Year Plan. He said: The Yazd tire factories, Ertavil Tire in Ardebil, the Pars Tire Development Project in Saveh, Kavir Tire in Birjand, and the Khuzestan Tire Project are among the development projects in this industry.

He added: By the end of the Second Five-Year Plan three projects, Ertavil Tire, Kavir Tire, and the Pars Tire Development Project, with a combined annual capacity of 75,000 tons production, will go into operation.

He discussed the technique for producing tires in Iran. He said: Most of the domestic tire factories use the diagonal method of production, while world tire production is based on the radial type. At this point several types of automobile tires of the radial type are also produced in Iran.

The director of the Chemical and Cellulose Industries Group in the Foundation for the Oppressed and Disabled continued: Future investment in tire production in Iran must be made in radial technology.

He announced that the total production in the nation's industrial carbon industries at the two industrial carbon units in Pars and Ahvaz is 63,000 tons. He said: Yet the maximum need for domestic tire production and various tire products is 33,000 tons. It thus appears that it will be necessary to export tires in the future.

Mo'tamed-Reza'i then discussed tire cord as an important tire component. He said: Tire cord, or tire cloth, which forms the structure of the tire, is to be produced in the city of Molayer by the Iran Industrial Fibers Company, which belongs to the Foundation for the Oppressed.

He advised the private sector to invest in various tire and tire component production fields, thereby helping the nation's economy to develop.

In conclusion, Mo'tamed-Reza'i discussed the Iran Tire Company's exports in the year 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994]. He said: During this year $700,000 in tires was exported to Yemen, Jordan, Romania, Bahrain, Afghanistan, and some Central Asian nations. Before tire exportation was prohibited this year [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], tire exports had reached $70,000.

Half of Country's Workers Lack Housing

95LA0129A Stockholm NAMEH-YE MARDOM in Persian 6 Dec 94 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] In a lecture given in Noshahr, on Monday, 23 Aban [14 November], 'Ali Reza Mahjub, secretary general of the Center for Labor Affairs, stated: "Despite the importance of housing for workers, 49 percent of the country's workers do not own housing." He added: "Presently, 2.1 million workers are faced with major housing problems."

Pakistan

American School Vehicle 'Snatched' in Karachi

BK2203032795 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Mar 95 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, March 21: A Staff car of the American School, located in KDA-Scheme 1, was snatched at gunpoint Tuesday [21 March], officials here said.

The incident came in less than 24 hours after a meeting between the Chief Minister and the diplomats posted in Karachi. Some of them - insiders revealed, were angry at government failure to control the lawlessness, and wanted firm guarantees for their own security, and for the nationals of their respective countries.

The Chief Minister faced problems during the meeting which was attended by head of missions from United States, Germany, Indonesia, Iran, Japan and several other important countries.

Tuesday's incident caused further anguish among US diplomats, some of whom have already sent their children back home as precautionary measures following the killing of two US mission employees earlier this month.

Reportage Continues on Possible Kansi Arrest

Babar Reportedly Denies Kansi Capture

BK2103165695 Hong Kong AFP in English 1641 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 21 (AFP)—Pakistani Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar on Tuesday [21 March] denied the suspected killer of two American CIA officials in Washington in 1993 had been arrested, officials said.

The denial followed a claim by two Pakistani senators who told the senate earlier in the day that Mir Aimal Kansi had been taken into custody from southwestern Balochistan province on Monday and brought to Islamabad.

The senators, Hafiz Hussain and Aftab Sheikh, had stated that Kansi was arrested along with another man involved in a fake currency racket.

Babar had earlier neither confirmed nor denied that Kansi had been arrested.

Kansi is accused by US authorities of killing two CIA officials in a shooting outside the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) headquarters in Washington on January 25, 1993.

After the shooting, Kansi was believed to have fled to Pakistan, where his relatives from the Pushtu-speaking Kansi tribe live in a provincial capital, Quetta.

Last month, Pakistan extradited Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf, the prime suspect in the 1993 New York World Trade Centre bombing which left six people dead and 1,000 injured, after his arrest a local hotel room.

Babar said in the senate that Ramzi was not a Pakistani national. Ramzi was born in Kuwait and had three nationalities and passports, the minister had said, without giving details.

He said that no Pakistani national would be extradited to the US or any other country without due legal process here.

Last August, a team from the CIA was in Quetta looking for Kansi, but their search, in which they were assisted by Pakistani soldiers, was unsuccessful.

Paper Reports Kansi Arrest

BK2203030795 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Mar 95 pp 1, 11

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 21: Aimal Kansi, who is wanted to the American government connection with the killing of four CIA agents and for whose arrest the US had announced award of 2 million dollars, was arrested by the Pakistani agencies on Monday [20 March] from Quetta, the Senate was informed on Tuesday.

Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar informed the House that two persons, who were part of a conspiracy to kill Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto were arrested from Balochistan.

The issue was raised on a point of order by Senator Hafiz Hussain Ahmed, who feared that the two Pakistanis were handed over to the US government, which according to him, was against the sovereignty of Pakistan. He said one Assistant Director of FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] along with US officials went to Quetta and brought Aimal Kansi and Abdul Ghani to Islamabad in a C-130 plane.

Senator Aftab Shaikh of MQM [Mujahir Qaumi Movement] wanted to know that under what law the government was handing them over to the US. Ibrahim Khan, ANP [Awami National Party] Senator, stated that Pakistan had its own investigation agencies and it should be made clear whether Pakistan had signed an extradition treaty with the US. He said the US was a terrorist country and had indluged in terrorist activities in Libya, Haiti, Panama and Iraq.

Senator Kamal Azfar of the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] provoked the Opposition, saying that "whenever any terrorist is arrested, the Opposition objects to it." Hafiz Hussain Ahmed was heard as saying that "You (Azfar) are an American agent."

The Interior Minister, who was absent when the issue was raised, informed the House later that the two Pakistanis were arrested in connection with the conspiracy to kill Benazir Bhutto. He said the fears that they were handed over to the US were not correct. They were in the custody of the government agencies which were investigating the matter.

Nasirullah Babar said the case of Ramzi Yusuf was altogether different from that of Aimal Kansi. Ramzi Yusuf in fact belonged to Iran and was born in Kuwait and had three passports of different countries. "His father is in a Kuwait jail," he continued.

He said one finger of Ramzi Yusuf was damaged while attacking the Bilawal House. He got medical treatment from the Jinn Medical Hospital Karachi where he got himself registered as Adam Khan. He said, "The government has gathered the information about the doctor who treated him."

He said, "most of the suspects the government is going to arrest in near future, are Arabs who landed in Pakistan during the Afghan war." He, however, informed the House that the government has signed an extradition treaty with the US government.

Senators Oppose Kansi's Extradition

BK2203063195 Islamabad THE NATION in English 22 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Imran Munir]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Islamabad—Speculations were rife in the Senate on Tuesday [21 March] regarding the identity of two men flown in on C-130 to Islamabad from Quetta on Monday night. Many Senators from Balochistan staged a walk out to protest against the likely extradition of Aimal Kansi, main suspect in the killing of two CIA personnel in America, whom they believed to be one of the men flown in.

Senators from Balochistan, later joined by others including the MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement], were of unanimous opinion that instead of extraditing Kansi like Ramzi in the past, the government should try him in Pakistani courts first.

They pointed out that unlike Ramzi, Kansi is a Pakistani citizen and since there are provisions in the Pakistani laws to try such cases, he should be put on trial here. They further argued that Pakistan should act like a sovereign state and not as an American colony.

Hafiz Hussain Ahmad said "the government should not hand over these two men to America rather they should be tried here".

Hafiz Sahib and Kamal Azfar locked in a debate which led to exchange of hot words when Hafiz termed the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] legislators as an advocate of American interests.

Amidst protests from Raza Rabbani, Sheikh Aftab Ahmad said "FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] lead by Mohammad Hanif and FBI team brought back Ahmal Kansi and Abdul Ghani, wanted on fake currency charges, from Quetta a C-13 plane. The US Ambassador to Pakistan categorically stated that the US will have their accused extradited whether an extradition treaty with that state exists or not".

He said "We have relevant laws to deals with criminals therefore these two should be tried there."

Responding to the speculations, Interior Minister Naseerullah Babar informed the House that Ramzi was born in Kuwait and he was not a Pakistani citizen, adding "We carried out all the necessary inquiries before extraditing Ramzi to the US."

He said Pakistan had a formal treaty with the US and has obligation to hand over their criminals, adding "These two would be interrogated in Pakistan ."

Babar gave a detailed account of Ramzi's involvement in an attempt to assassinate Benazir Bhutto, saying " His one finger was blown when the bomb accidentally went off and he remained in the Jinnah Hospital from July 23 to August 6 for treatment". He said they had interrogated the duty doctors, Saleh Mohammad and Dr Niazi.

He desisted from disclosing the identity of the two arrested but but on a query from the Chair, he assured that they have not been handed over to any other country. He said the latest arrests are part of the on-going inquiry and people arrested from Quetta were identified by those who are in custody of the government, adding "Most of the people who were arrested during the ongoing inquiry are foreigners."

Meanwhile leader of the opposition in the Senate Raja Zafarul Haq asked the Interior Minister to provide a copy of extradition treaty with the US, if any.

Later, talking to newsmen in his chamber the Interior Minister, Naseerullah Babar said he was not sure whether one of the two men was Aimal Kansi, adding "Why should we hide".

He said they had nabbed a few persons in Peshawar which led them to the recent raid in Quetta.

Govt. opposition urged to work for strengthening democracy.

[passage omitted]

'Anti-American Feelings'in Senate

BK2203095295 Islamabad THE NATION in English 22 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Amir Mateen under the rubric: "Press Gallery" : "A popular wave of anger"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—The overwhelming support for Aimal Kansi expressed in the Senate showed the anti-American feelings that seemed to have seeped well into our Parliamentarians. Kansi only happened to be the symbol. Through him, the members vented the popular wave against the super power which had ditched Pakistan time and again.

So great was this sentiment that the members did not even wait to confirm whether one of the two alleged terrorists flown in from Quetta to Islamabad through a C-130 in the midst of the night was actually Kansi. That the suspicion had been expressed in local newspapers, it was enough to spark off their emotions. The overreaction certainly had more to it than an ordinary issue.

"For God's sake behave like a sovereign country, "roared MQM [Muhatir Qaumi Movement] Aftab Sheikh." Don't make us an American colony. We have our own laws which should not be bypassed whle pleasing the Americans."

Hafiz Hussaim Ahmad was critical of Ramzi's extradition. In his opinion, he had got himself registered in Pakistan. He should have been tried in Pakistan before handing him over to the Americans.

Ramzi's extradition had not been received well. It was quite understandable until this feeling was confined to religious parties. it was surprising to learn that even the most moderate members had a soft corner for these "crusaders" seen as terrorists by the rest of the world. For many, Ramzi and Kansi were heroes who had avenged the sufferings of Bosnians, Chechnyans and Kashmiris.

Nasirullah Babar stood up to clarify that they had yet to identify the two men. They were still being interrogated. He categoricaly stated that it if was Kansi he, being a Pakistani, would be first tried in local courts. Later, when we joined thim at his chambers, he explained that they were being discreet because the news of apprehending five terrorists from Peshawar had alerted the rest of them. The C-130 was used because his FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] sleuths got stuck up in Dera Ismail Khan because of bad weather in Quetta.

One must give credit to Babar for he is always available to journalists. You ask him anything, he always has an answer. Mostly a wrong one. "Thank God, he is no more a General because he just can't hide any secret," quipped a colleague. But the man sure has a sense of humour. He seemed amused by THE NATION cartoon which showed him being pushed towards a psychiatrist.

But it sounded strange that the FIA, despite its notoriety for third degree methods, had still not identified the two terrorists. He left a reasonable doubt that it could be Kansi, or someone equally important. For what else could cause him to rush a C-130 for their immediate transportation to Quetta? The government had certainly showed extra swiftness. What for?

Nobody had any doubt that the government was desperate to appease the American. Anyone who is someone in government seems obsessed with Benazir's American tour. She had cried herself hoarse telling that F-16s are not coming. Nor is the Pressler Amendment going away. But people still can't give up hopes. The cafeteria is abuzz with discussions. Wherever you went, you find people asking questions. As if everything depended on this trip to the land of opportunities.

A government Senator had a simple theory. "It's the politics of the Establishment that we are doing this time around. So what do we have? The Presidency is in safe hands. The army has been neutralised. And it's important to secure the flank strategically considered to be the most significant—America." He frankly admitted that people fared nowhere in their current politics.

But the government certainly faced a dilemma. The American tour might be important. But it looked like going against the tide. If the Parliament is any yardstick to the people's mood, Benazir seemed isolated in countering the popular anti-American wave.

Even kid brother Murtaza Bhutto seemed to have realised that. It was for the first time that he had addressed the Parliamentary Press corps. he definitely was impressive. Smart, sprightly and sparkling. But the general impression was that he lacked the team which could launch him well. He may have built inroads in interior Sindh, pockets in the Frontier and Punjab, he has a long way to go. Much to his misfortune, Malik Hakmeen could not escape shaking hands with him when Murtaza burst into him in the lobby. The poor chap already saw his CEC [expansion unknown] membership dwindling, his ministerial hopes gone and future pitch dark. But Murtaza had what many believed his sister lacked: understanding the pulse of the common lot. He seemed to have realised this growing loathing for America. "We just can't let foreign powers [be] telling us what to do," he said, puffing deeply at his cigarette. He was very clear that the America, or any other power for that matter, should not be allowed to dicate to us.

Rumour has it that the Foreign Office does not have any record of the three American victims, two of whom got killed recently in Karachi. One of them was confirmed by the American authorities as a CIA agent. The other victim who died also did not look like a postal worker as claimed by the US embassy. A journalist who saw his body believed he seemed too fit to be an ordinary worker. His marine cut, plus his well-built structure revealed that he must have undergone the rigours of extra hard training.

The theory goes that all the three might have been under cover CIA agents sent on a visit visa to accomplish a certain mission, the most likely being the elimination of Kansi. It's all beginning to look like a James Bond film. Isn't it 007?

'Accomplice' of Ramzi Yusuf Identified

BK2203034695 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Mar 95 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] QUETTA, March 21—An alleged accomplice of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf in the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York who was arrested here on Sunday [19 March] last, was identified as Mohammad Akhtar.

Officials, however, refused to disclose the identity of Mohammad Akhtar who was arrested from a bungalow in [Karachi] Satellite Town. [sentence as published]

Plain-clothes operatives of US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] and Frontier Corps personnel picked him and flown him to Islamabad.

Akhtar was recognised by one of the six suspects rounded up in Peshawar a couple of days back in the same connection. He is said to be an Iraqi national.

Details on Ramzi 'Contact'

BK2203060195 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 22 Mar 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Quetta—The United States Federal Burau of Investigation (FBI) agents, officials of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and personnel of Frontier Corps (FC) have arrested a contact of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf here on Sunday [19 March], official sources confirmed Tuesday.

The official sources although did not disclose the name of the arrested some other sources identified him as Haji Akhtar Mohammad Bareeh who owned a timber depot in suburb of Quetta. However, they clarified that Ainsi Kansi was not arrested.

Later, the family sources of Haji Akhtar Mohammad told THE FRONTIER POST that on 19th of this month a group of people in plain- clothes came to the timber depot and arrested him.

Later, the group raided the house of Akhtar Mohammad in Bareeh colony adjoining to the Satellite Town and thoroughly searched it, but could not recover anything, they added.

It is also learnt that one of the six accused of Ramzi group arrested in Peshawar a few days back was also flown to Quetta to identify Haji Akhtar Mohammad.

The raid was conducted by the FBI agents, assisted by local FIA and FC personnel in plain-clothes whereas deputy commissioner Quetta Fawad Hussain Fawad was also present during the raid.

The arrested accused was shifted to Islamabad in a C-130 later.

The official sources also said the provincial government was fully cooperating with federal government to facilitate the task of visiting team to arrest contact of Ramzi.

Editorial Lists Causes of 'Hatred' for U.S.

BK2003161595 Rawalpindi HAIDER in Urdu 16 Mar 95 p 4

[Editorial: "Why There is Hatred Toward the United States in Pakistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that the reason for the Pakistani people's feeling of hatred toward the United States is Washington's double-edged policy. If Washington were to formulate its policies sincerely, keeping in mind the aspirations of the Pakistani people, the people of Pakistan would prove to be the vanguards for the United States. The United States has suspended military and economic aid to Pakistan under the Pressler Amendment on the pretext that Islamabad possesses nuclear weapons, thus creating unnecessary difficulties for the Pakistani people, even though Islamabad has not made any nuclear weapons yet, despite possessing the technical know-how. Washington knows this full well and has also accepted this fact. The United States is also fully aware of the fact that Pakistan is currently waging a war against extremist and fanatic forces and has stood like a wall against forces out to undermine global stability. In this situation, it was in the interest of the United States to adopt a strategy to further strengthen Pakistan.

Washington should have also realized that Islamabad is trying to save the West from the drug menace by waging a war against the drug mafia and narcotics. The Western countries should have fought this war themselves for their survival, but they have placed the entire responsibility on Pakistan's shoulders. Under these circumstances, the United States and other Western countries should have given full attention to strengthening Pakistan by providing political and moral support; but Washington, instead of appreciating Islamabad's services, stopped the supply of F-16 aircraft for which payments were already made. On the other hand, the United States has started to shower favors on India, the nation with which Pakistan has been having a dispute over Kashmir for the past 47 years.

On what basis, then, does Washington want the people of Pakistan to show love and affection toward the United States? If the United States wants to secure the Pakistani people's support, then its first duty should be to announce the repeal of the Pressler Amendment and to pressure India to settle the Kashmir problem in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions. Washington should also persuade India to reduce its offensive weapon stockpiles to generate feelings of sympathy in the hearts of the Pakistani people toward the United States. As for the Government of Pakistan, its utmost desire is to establish friendly relations with the United States on the basis of equality. Washington is solely to blame for any malice found in Pakistan toward the United States. Anyway, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is scheduled to visit the United States. This will provide a golden opportunity to Washington to take positive steps to improve U.S.-Pakistani relations.

Column Views Bhutto's 'Sensitive' U.S. Visit

BK2103101095 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Mar 95 p 7

[Article by Syed Alamdar Raza from the "Candid Column": "Benazir Bhutto's Sensitive American Visit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Benazir Bhutto (BB)'s foreign tours have already become highly controversial. They are too many, too frequent and under severe criticism. According to BB, they are very well worth the money spent on them because they have succeeded in attracting fabulous amount of investments but according to the Opposition it is only a myth because hardly any contracts worth the name have been signed. The country has no tradition of accountability and whatever exercises used to take place on cost benefit ratio, have breathed their last in 1958 after the imposition of Martial Law. Thus it is free for all those undertaking the tours can claim whatever they like and those criticising them can blame them in the worst possible language and get away with it. There is no data or objective criteria on the basis of which a dispassionate assessment can be made. BB's ensuing American tour is also generating all possible controversies which may cast ominous shadows on the outcome of the visit.

Undoubtedly Pakistan has a long pending agenda with USA. Since 1954 when we entered into all sorts of pacts with USA including defence pacts, our relations have been very deep and multidimensional. After the end of the Afghan war and the collapse of USSR as a super power, serious difficulties have been created and it has not been possible to maintain even working relationship on the basis of which our existing contracts could be serviced what to say of updating these contracts or signing new contracts. [sentence as published] The Pressler amendment has jammed even existing inflow and some cases the pipeline assistance has also been blocked. All the sectors of our national life have been very seriously affected as a result of this new development, but the worst affected sector is our Defence capability. F-16 Aircraft which had been paid for have been held back as also several other defence stores. Not only this, USA is pressurising Pakistan to sign the NPT without any practical propositions to ensure that the security requirements and needs of the country are adequately safeguarded. This has put Pakistan in a very uncuriable [as published] position, its economic development has stagnated and her defence capabilities have been badly affected. It is necessary that these problems are solved and to the extent they cannot be solved, new initiatives are required to be taken to ensure that Pakistan's security and viability are not adversely affected. These are compelling factors justifying BB's visit to America. The indications from America are that BB has a good image with the American policy makers and with her forceful personality and persuasive abilities, she is capable of securing the best possible terms of agreement.

The Opposition, however, feels that the visit is ill-timed and BB's position is so weak that during her visit to America, she will have only the legal powers to sign on the dotted lines. She can not differ or take a stand on any issue because the national will is not supporting her and the country is in a mess with law and order collapsing and the economy becoming incapable of sustaining itself what to say of generating itself what to say of generating any growth BB is so forlorn that, at best, she can he said to be representing Pakistan People's Party and not the people of Pakistan. To bail herself out of this impossible situation, the Opposition claims that BB is spending over a billion dollars on her image building and this money is being spent not through the normal Embassy channels but through an American firm with whom special contract has been signed. In the absence of full facts, it is difficult to express acceptable opinion but what appears to be clear as day light is that the visit of BB to USA is not taking place under the best of circumstances. She will need to work hard to establish that she is an unchallenged national figure capable of taking difficult, controversial and sensitive decisions on the matters affecting vital national interest. It is true that she is an elected Prime Minister and, as such, she is fully authorised to do what she likes and no other authorisation or support is required enabling her to do what she decides to do. This argument is unassailable legally but politics is not run on points of law alone. The basic principle of conducting good politics is to develop concensus. The Prime Minister of a country has all the powers which a dictator possesses under most of the constitutions of the world but what differentiates an elected leader from a dictator is that whereas the former is the leader of the people leading with concensus and maximum agreements, the latter is an unbridled ruler taking unpopular decisions and enforcing them with brute force.

BB is not only a democratically elected Prime Minister but also a leader of her people. At least that is what she claims. It is, therefore, very necessary that her American tour enjoys maximum possible national support. She has already taken a first step in this direction in that she has invited the leader of Opposition to accompany her to USA. It is a very good initiative and it should be followed up with comprehensive briefings to the Opposition leader. This is not an easy job to accomplish under the present environment of confrontations and complete lack of trust. The politicians are, however, known to achieve wonders when they decide to do so and if there is a political will to do so.

The American visit is no ordinary happening. The outcome of this visit will have very far-reaching effects and consequences on the future of Pakistan. Hence it is the most important item on the national agenda and it should be treated as such. As already stated, BB's visit to USA is not taking place under the best of circumstances. This, however, is a variable factor which can be vastly changed. The visit is still two weeks away and during this interval a lot can be done. The most important thing to do is that there should be a meeting between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. The agenda of this meeting should be prepared by mutual agreement consequent - upon informal exchanges. Once an agenda has been agreed upon, a formal invitation should be extended by the Prime Minister to the leader of Opposition for formal talks. The scope of these talks should cover the following aspects:

1) The difficulties obstructing the development of good working relationship between the Opposition and the Government and an agreement on their removal.

2) Development of a framework under which it can be ensured that the government operates within the accepted democratic framework and the Opposition is given all the rights and privileges due to it under the democratic system.

3) An emergency plan is mutually agreed upon to control the deteriorating law and order situation and normalise the existing conditions of insecurity.

4) A joint strategy be developed on the agenda items due to come up for discussion between the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the American President.

5) The issues which cannot be resolved should be taken up after the American visit.

Prime Minister should seek the help of Chief of Army Staff in bringing about reconciliation where the process runs into difficulties.

BB should personally invite Mohammad Nawaz Sharif to accompany her to USA an act of grace which the latter should reciprocate with equal warmth.

It is necessary for BB to realise that her election as Prime Minister alone is not sufficient to enable her to decide vital issues facing the nation at present. She needs everybody's help most important of all she needs support of the Leader of Opposition. If this cooperation is not forthcoming both may be doomed. Worse still the entire democratic system of the country may be doomed and the masses may be left unrepresented.

Spokesman Previews Bhutto Agenda

BK2203120195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, during her talks with U.S. leaders, will focus on trade and not aid, emphasizing partnership not dependency.

Briefing newsmen in Islamabad this afternoon, a Foreign Office spokesman said she would pay the official visit to the United States from 5th to the 14th of next month at the invitation of President Clinton. She will be holding talks with President Clinton on the 11th of next month. She will also have a detailed exchange of views with the speaker of House of Representatives, the Senate majority leader, besides meetings with Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House International Relations Committee. She will address U.S. think tanks, media, members of Pakistani community, and meet a number of U.S. businessmen, and address an investment conference, inviting U.S. private sector participation in our economic program.

The spokesman said Pakistan will seek the support of the administration and the Congress to modify Pressler Amendment which is a country-specific legislation and has not served its purpose. He said Jammu and Kashmir dispute will be high on the agenda during talks with the American leaders.

Country Taking Part in Abu Dhabi Weapons Show

BK1903140195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 19 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan is participating in the international weapons show beginning in Abu Dhabi today. Defense equipment will be displayed at the show. This is the first time Pakistan is taking part in a show in which modern weapons manufactured in Pakistan and other defense equipment will be displayed.

Sri Lanka

Government, LTTE Continue Efforts Toward Peace

BK1903145195 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Mrs. Chandrika Kumaratunga says that the government will act to further strengthening the aspirations of the people of the North for the restoration of peace. She was speaking in the BBC's (Sandeshia) program. She said that the government has prepared a set of political solutions to the ethnic conflict and requested the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] for a discussion on them over the past four months. However, they have not come forward to do so. The LTTE continues to demand discussions on the dismantling of the Pooneryn army camp and the removal of limitations on fishing imposed on fishermen of the North. It was the government's position that along with these issues discussions should also be also be held on political matters. The president told the BBC interview that the LTTE has so far failed to respond in this regard.

Replying to a question on the letter last issued by the LTTE that the government was unilaterally acting even in the peace process, the president said that it has been mentioned that this letter was sent by the political bureau of the LTTE. She said that this letter had however not been signed by the LTTE leader and it was difficult to say whether it had actually been issued by the LTTE. Anyway, the letter had not mentioned that the government was generally acting unilaterally. It had only mentioned as unilateral the decision to open the Elephant Pass road via the Pooneryn-Sangupiddy route. This road had to be reopened for the convenience of the people of the North and for the transportation of goods needed for the development of the North. The president made it clear that the talks in this respect held over a two-month period failed to produce agreement. The reason was that the LTTE put forward a proposal that was not relevant to the reopening of the road for removal of the Pooneryn camp. The president explained that in this situation the government had to discharge its responsibility. The army had removed the obstacles placed on this route and it was for the LTTE to remove the obstacles placed by them. Whether it agrees or not, the government will fulfill its part of its responsibility.

The president said that she met Lawrance Thilakar of the LTTE for talks when she was in Copenhagen for the UN summit on social development. She said that the discussions were cordial and on this basis hope could be placed on the peace process. Referring to the summit itself, the president said that an important proposal was made to the world leaders gathered in Copenhagen to write-off a greater portion of the debt owed by the third world countries. France and several other countries had come out in support of this proposal.

The LTTE is under international pressure to commence a political dialogue with the Sri Lankan Government without any further delay. Diplomatic sources based in Colombo told LANKAPUVATH that the international community was becoming tired of intransigent attitude adopted by the Tiger leadership. It was now insisting that Prabhakaran respond positively and reciprocated the gesture of peace, goodwill, and understanding which have been made by President Chandrika Kumaratunga. In addition, to the recent United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva pointedly telling the LTTE to reciprocate positively to the desire of the Sri Lankan Government for a peaceful solution to the ethnic conflict, the European Union, the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and France are exerting pressure on the LTTE to begin serious negotiations to end the conflict.

Government Studying Letter Sent by LTTE

BK2003132495 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government yesterday studied the latest letter from LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, who has set March 28 as the deadline for the government's response, official sources said. A senior government spokesman said the LTTE had not set any deadline for the peace process. It had only asked for a response before March 28.

The LTTE, which released two of the fasting policemen on Thursday [16 March] and 13 more policemen and a soldier on Saturday [18 March], has told the intermediaries which included the Anglican bishop, Fernando; Colombo University political science lecturer, Dr. Jayawewa Uyangode; and Mr. Charles Abheysekere that the hardships of the civilians should be eased to create the proper environment for the strenuous political talks.

Mr. Prabhakaran in his letter of March 6 to President Chandrika Kumaratunga has specified the three issues which should be resolved before March 28. If a favorable response is not received from you before March 1995, we will be compelled to make a painful decision as to whether to continue the peace process or not, Mr. Prabhakaran has concluded the letter. The three issues which the LTTE wants to settled are the opening of the Pooneryn Road to civilian traffic after vacating the military camp from there, a complete lifting of the economic embargo, and the withdrawal of the ban on fishing in Northern waters. The government has earlier rejected all these demands saying that they involve the security of the state.

LTTE Vows Not To Damage Property

BK2103155295 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leaders in the Mannar District do not object to the government's decision to supply essential goods and basic amenities to the northern people. They have also vowed not to damage government and public property in their areas, hereafter. They gave this assurance to a group of parliamentarians led by Planning, Ethnic Affairs, and National Integration Deputy Minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle at a conference held at (Madursher) on Sunday [19 March]. The conference followed a special feast held at (Madursher) after 11 years with a congregation of over 5,000 Catholics including pilgrims from the south on Sunday night.

LTTE district leaders assured that they will never obstruct development work in the north as they are not against the supply of electricity, communication equipment, transport, and other facilities to their people. They said this in response to a question as to whether the LTTE was grabbing part of the goods supplied to the Jaffna people. LTTE leaders have said the government was genuinely interested in catering to the welfare of the northern people. This is our concern too, so we do not want to deny the people what they are offered. The problems of farmers in the north including their requirements of urea were also discussed at this meeting.

LTTE Releases 2 Policemen

BK1903095495 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 18 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Head of the Anglican Church of Sri Lanka, Bishop Kenneth Fernando is expected to bring two of the fasting police captives released by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] in Jaffna to Colombo today. The remaining 13 policemen and a soldier continue with their fast unto death, which they began on the 1st of this month. The LTTE leadership released the two fasting policemen to Bishop Fernando after a simple religious ceremony where they are being held in northern peninsula. The LTTE has released the policemen as a mark of respect of the visiting religious dignitary on humanitarian grounds.

The International Committee of Red Cross and doctors attached to Jaffna teaching hospital looked into the medical needs of the released policemen. These captives of the LTTE for the past five years had been taken into custody first in 1990 from two police stations in the northern province of the island. [sentence as heard]

The Army has set up an additional checkpoint for goods transport to the north. The checkpoint is at Puloowa in Vavuniya. According to the operational headquarters of the Defense Ministry, the special foods and other items to the north will be checked at this point. It says that the military now has the capacity to check much larger number of vehicles than earlier. Hitherto, only one checkpoint was set up Rattaperiyakulam and there was delay in checking. This resulted the vehicles being delayed by days during checking. This was projected by the people of the north to the deputy defense minister, Anuruddha Ratwatte, during his inspection tour of Vavuniya early this month. The Defense Ministry points out that at present there are absolutely no delays for checking of vehicles carrying goods to the north by the military.

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